MARCH 1997

THE UNESCO COURIER

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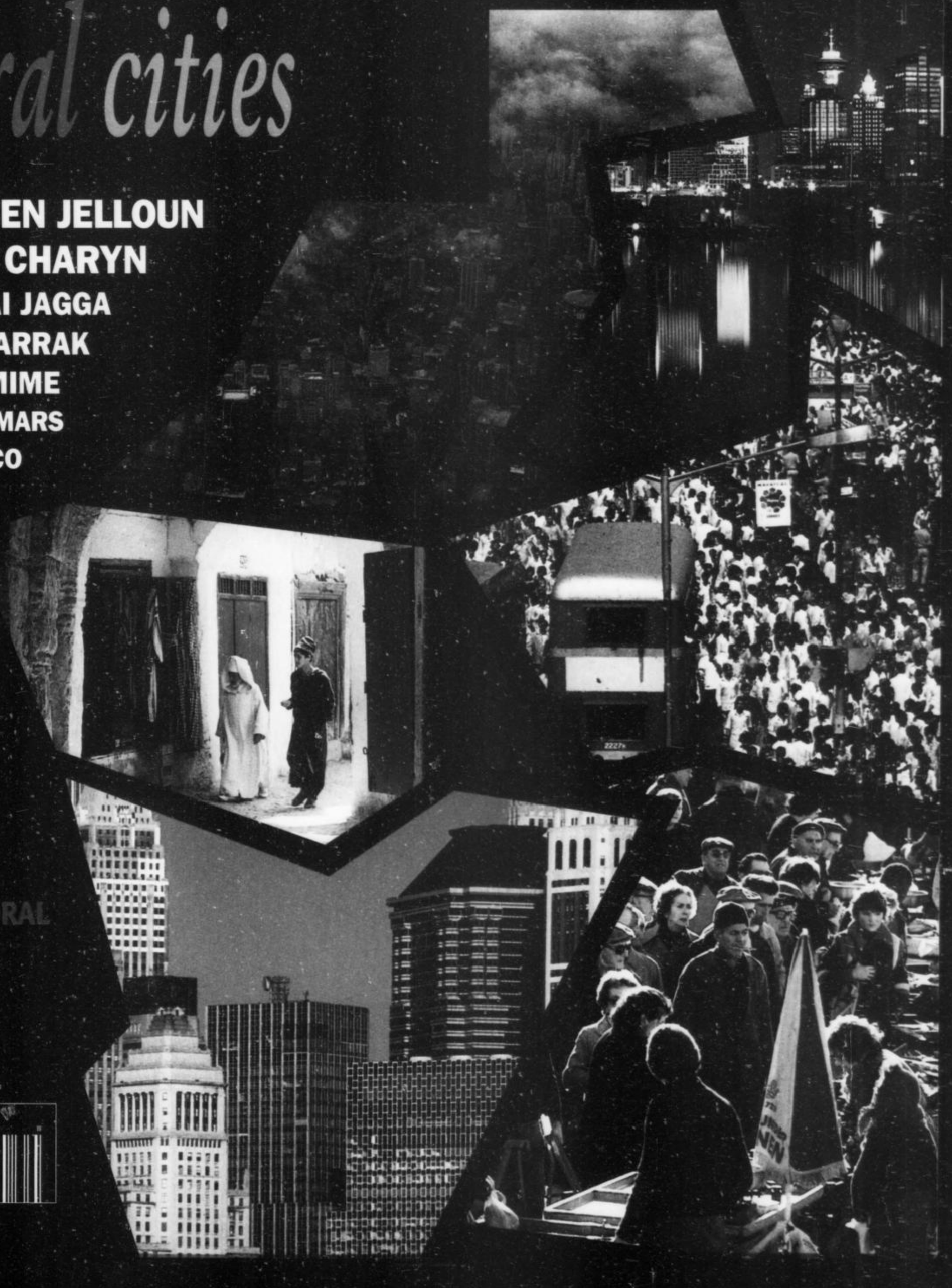

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We invite readers to send us photographs to be considered for publication in this feature. Your photo should show a painting, a sculpture, piece of architecture or any other subject which seems to be an example of cross-fertilization between cultures.
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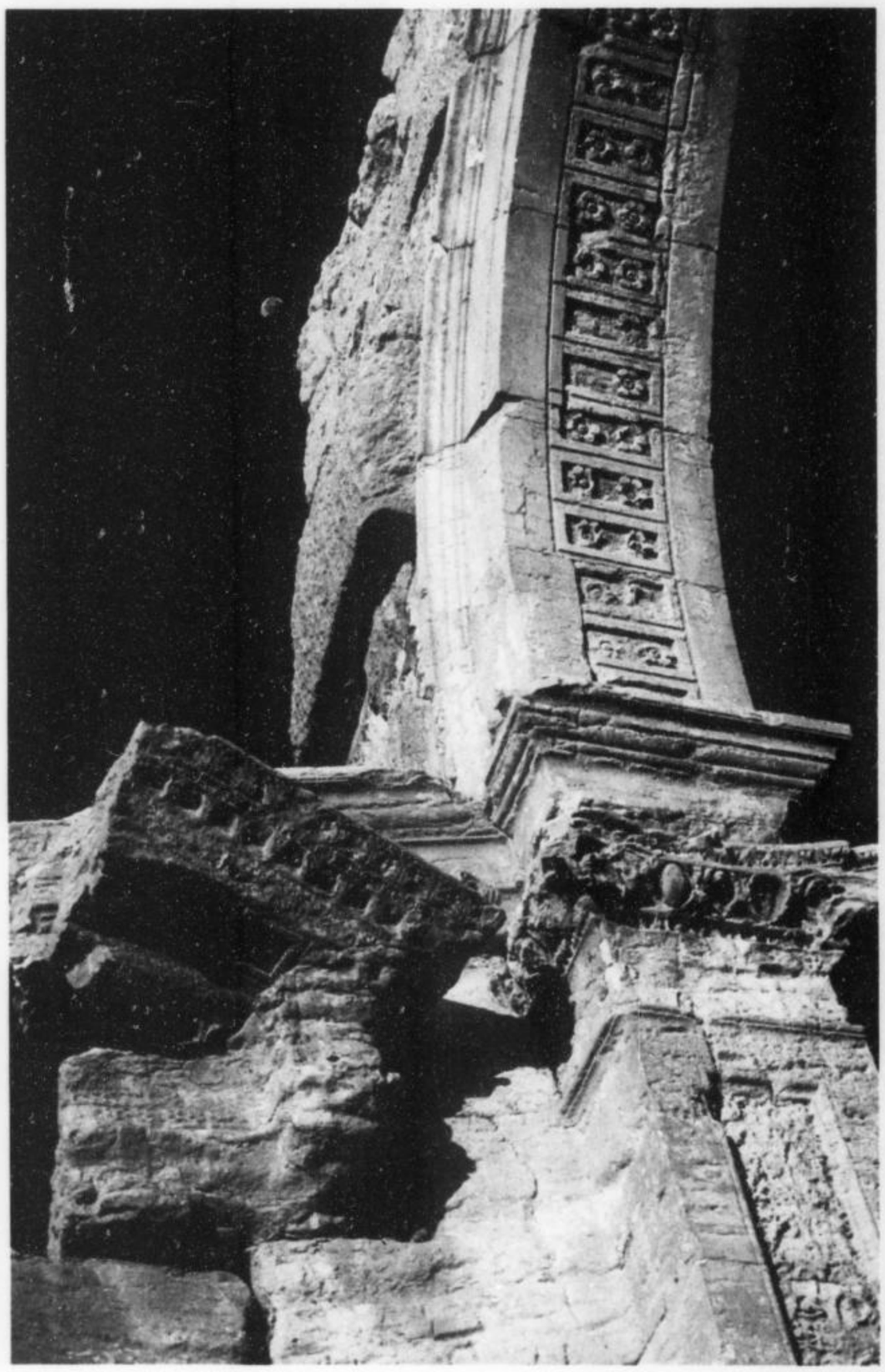

RUINS OF THE EAST *1995, photos by Luc Maréchaux*

In a series of photos taken in Lebanon and Syria, Luc Maréchaux compares the time-worn ruins of majestic Palmyra (left) with the devastation wrought in Beirut by fifteen years of civil war. "We can forgive slow destruction by time," he notes, "but what should we think of destruction by human action?"

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MARCH 1997

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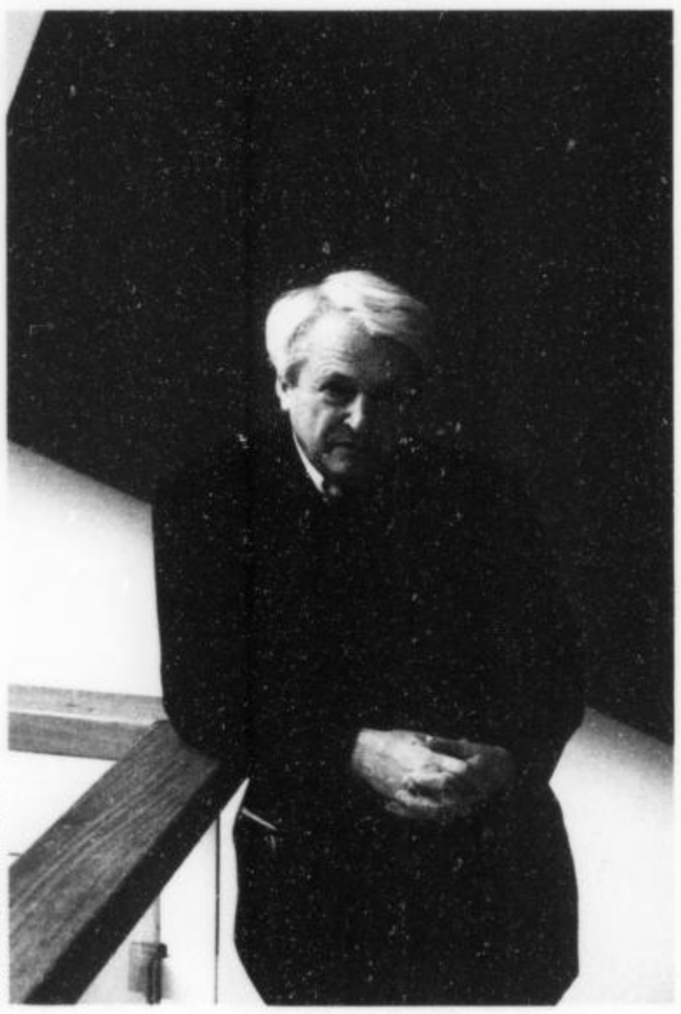
interview

Interviewed by Jasmina Šopova, two leading writers from former Yugoslavia, a Bosnian Croat and a Serb, testify in the light of their experience of the war that tore their country apart. Looking beyond eastern Europe, they draw some general conclusions from what they have learned, about the role of the writer and the psychology of nationalist conflicts.



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Predrag Matvejević

Predrag Matvejević was born in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina). His father was a Russian from Odessa, his mother a Bosnian Croatian. He taught at the University of Zagreb before settling in Rome where he teaches Slavonic literature at the University of Sapienza. A staunch champion of human rights who defended many persecuted east European intellectuals under the communist system, he now spends much of his time trying to heal the wounds of the fratricidal war that tore his country apart. The works of this brilliant essayist have been translated into ten or so languages. His *The Mediterranean—a Cultural Landscape* will be published later this year by the California University Press.

■ **"Between asylum and exile" is the formula you use to define your situation as an intellectual "who came in from the East".**

Predrag Matvejević: I am not really an exile. No one exiled me from Croatia and the former Yugoslavia. I left Croatia because I realized that I could express myself more openly and freely elsewhere. But when I had left, I saw that this was a trap. This is what I meant when I talked about being between "asylum and exile". Asylum neutralizes your message and exile distances it from its goal.

But intellectuals from the East are not the only people in this situation. So too are intellectuals in the Western world. The relatively comfortable position they enjoy in their own countries is a kind of "born" asylum. At the same time they are exiles because they cannot take part in decision-making and have no say in social projects. They are exiles in their own homeland.

■ **"Between treason and outrage" is another phrase you often use.**

P. M.: Yes. Every word I utter against the atmosphere I live in, or against the national group to which I belong, is regarded as treasonable. Any criticism I make of others is regarded as a calumny and an outrage. This position "between treason and outrage" exists in many cultures and destroys critical thought. You are caught in a vice which prevents you from expressing yourself freely.

■ **The main reason for your voluntary exile is to enjoy freedom of expression. Do those who stayed behind have to keep their mouths shut?**

P. M.: I would say that they stand "between silence and obedience". Silence about mistakes that are made—here too I'm not only talking about former Yugoslavia—silence because you're afraid to talk, because the media are controlled, etc. Obedience, because by obeying the authorities you keep your privileges.

■ **So are silence and obedience both forms of self-betrayal?**

P. M.: Not necessarily. Silence can mean a lot of things. There are eloquent silences. The silence of Boris Pasternak and Anna Akhmatova under Stalinism meant "We reject Zhdanovist social realism, we reject terror in the arts and letters." But there is also a silence which is a sign of conformity, of acceptance of an existing state of affairs. I think this is the position of the nationalist intelligentsia. Its silence about what happened in Vukovar and Sarajevo means: "Let's keep quiet. We are not guilty."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

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Vidosav Stevanović

Vidosav Stevanović, a leading contemporary Serb writer, lived for thirty years in Belgrade, before going into exile in 1991. Since 1995 he has been living quietly in a house outside the town of Kragujevac, where he was born. Although his voice is not heard in his own country, he is well known internationally. His works have been published in some twenty languages.

■ **In 1995, after your period of self-imposed exile, you returned to your home country. But you still travel a lot. . . .**

Vidosav Stevanović: I travel from time to time. I often go to Paris. Soon I shall be visiting Prague and the United States, on the occasion of a film which is being made based on *The Island of the Balkans*, the second book of my trilogy *The Snow and the Dogs*. The director is a Croatian in exile. We are on the same wavelength in our attitudes to our respective countries. The Czech Republic is the only country that has been willing to give a nationality to this film. And so a Croatian and a Serb are making a Czech film for the European market, probably in English. . . .

■ **Isn't there a risk that this collaboration will cause you problems? Predrag Matvejević describes a situation "between treason and outrage".**

V. S.: I agree with this idea. It is true to our experience. The only way of avoiding the traps that are set for you is to write what you feel and what you think, whatever the cost, now or in the future, when it may well be even higher. At least you will have acted according to your conscience; you won't have been sullied by the evil that rages in the Balkans.

■ **Is keeping silent a form of self-preservation from this evil? Some writers have chosen silence in the current situation.**

V. S.: Most of my country's writers today live in silence. An eloquent silence, some people say. I don't agree with them. There are moments in history when people should come out of their corner and fight for specific values, in this case the values of humanism (however old-fashioned that may seem), the values of a civilization that does not know how to defend itself. I'm talking about European civilization. We must fight for these ideals, just as we must fight against those intellectuals who have engineered war programmes and war propaganda, and fomented hatred. Let's not be too indulgent towards those who keep quiet. Can we accept that a country's literature should be reduced to a handful of people who speak out in the midst of a general silence?

When a war ends, people are affected by collective amnesia. "There was no war, we didn't take part in it; there were no crimes, it's got nothing to do with us." They remember nothing. Those of us who speak out belong to the awkward squad, because we remember what has happened. "Undesirable" though we may be, we shall continue to bear witness.

A people cannot get over its fundamental problems without making an in-depth analysis of itself, just as some patients cannot be cured without being psychoanalysed. Nationalism is a sickness. A people must settle accounts with itself, face up to its phantasms and its myths that are the source of everything that has happened. Until it has come to terms with its own conscience—not other people's—the lull will be short-lived. The phantasms will sink to the bottom and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Predrag Matvejević

I refused to adopt that position. That is one of the reasons why I left.

■ **This attitude is comparable to one that appears in your recent books—"between refusal and praise".**

P. M.: Yes. Some people don't only obey, they sing the praises of the authorities. Others don't take refuge in silence but openly express their hostility to the authorities. The gap between these two positions is growing wider. Very few people stay in their country and express their revolt.

■ **Your latest book, *The "Ex" World, Confessions*, contains some hard thinking about the war in former Yugoslavia. You write: "In this war there are neither victors nor vanquished. Everywhere there are victims. . . ."**

P. M.: And I go on to add: "There is no just partition of Bosnia; the only act of justice would be not to partition it." The first victim is Bosnia itself. I have always been on the side of the victims. At the time of the aggression against Croatia and against Vukovar, I was on the side of the Croatian victims. But when Croatian soldiers destroyed the bridge at Mostar which had survived all kinds of barbaric acts since it was built in 1566, and then the part of Mostar where the Muslim majority lived, my sympathy again went to the victims.

■ **You also write: "Losing is part of our destiny. But it is rare to lose a country. It has happened to me." Is mourning an appropriate word to use here?**

P. M.: I think that former Yugoslavia's policy of non-alignment in a deeply divided world had merits that deserved a better fate. Even if this people wanted to split up, I would have preferred them to do so without war. Perhaps I am alone in this, but I like Yugoslavia as a whole. Wherever I go in Yugoslavia I feel at home. At the same time I don't think I usurp the identity of its different constituent peoples in any way. You might call this, wrongly, "unitarist Yugoslavism" or talk of "Yugonostalgia", but it's nostalgia for the peace and well-being of all these peoples. I am without prejudice. I just feel very suspicious of those who are guilty, even if they are guilty to different degrees.

■ **What do you think of the emergence of national cultures from Yugoslav culture?**

P. M.: We all fight for the right to a national culture. That is an undeniable right. But some areas of a national culture often turn into nationalist ideology, as happened under fascism. The fascist regimes included cultured people who helped to shape their ideologies. We saw this in Italy, Germany and Spain. We also saw it in Stalinist Russia. It is necessary to be more critical and vigilant where national culture is concerned. This is a danger we're not always aware of.

■ **In your recent books you sound the alarm against another danger: considering each characteristic of a people as an intrinsic value.**

P. M.: Yes, this mistake is often made. Particularity is not necessarily a value. Cannibalism is a particularity. Does that make it a value? If you don't make a distinction between these two notions, then you can slip from particularity to particularism.

■ **Your book *The Mediterranean—a Cultural Landscape*, first published before the war, was a reflection on the Mediterranean which was not confined to current events. In *The "Ex" World, Confessions*, however, which appeared in 1996, you return to the same theme but treat it quite differently. Is this change of perspective a result of the war?**

P. M.: Yes, the war sharpened some of my attitudes. The earlier book ignored current events and said nothing about the hard realities of the Mediterranean today, whereas the chapter devoted to this in my latest book is an indictment in which I emphasize the complete difference between the Mediterranean and the usual image of it. This "land of myths" has suffered from the mythologies it has given rise to. Decisions about its fate are taken elsewhere.

■ **What does it mean to be an "ex"?**

P. M.: You are not born an "ex"; it is something you become. From one day to the next you discover that you are an ex-Yugoslav or you declare that you are an ex-communist. For some this is a happy experience, for others a traumatic one. It is a situation that is regrettable to varying degrees (one does not miss the ex-Soviet Union in the same way as one misses ex-Bosnia and Herzegovina). In individual experience, the word "ex" does not have the same meaning. At the end of the last century, Nietzsche said that he wanted to be "untopical", i.e. "ex" in relation to the present, but he had the future in mind. The untopicality of certain "exes" today looks towards a past that is over.

■ **There seem to be a lot of "exes" in Europe as the century draws to a close. What has happened to the myth of progress?**

P. M.: The idea of progress and other utopian ideas were seriously compromised by Stalinism and by what happened in the former Soviet Union. The idea of emancipation has been pushed into the shadows, whereas it should be held before us as a guideline, without reference to any kind of ideology. The absence of this idea, at the end of the century, is tantamount to an absence of humanism. It is here, outside ideological paradigms, that I am trying to find my way. ■

Between asylum and exile

Vidosav Stevanović

float back to the surface when the next shock occurs; then we shall see a modern version of last century's war in the Balkans.

■ **This recurring war is the leitmotiv of your book recently published in French as *Prélude à la guerre* (Prelude to War). In the first edition, published in Serbian ten years ago under the title *Testament*, you wrote: "Today or tomorrow we shall lose freedom. All that my ancestors have accumulated will be taken away from us. Everything will be destroyed, devastated, looted; people will be torn to pieces, women raped, churches desecrated. Nothing will be left . . . ." Those were prophetic words.**

V. S.: Critics have drawn attention to the "prophetic" element in this book, but you don't have to be a genius to foresee war! Wars usually break out for the same reasons, happen in the same way and are followed by the same amnesia. It's not hard to be a prophet when you prophesy evil.

I don't want to be either a prophet or a people's guide. That is not the writer's job. At most he can be the voice of conscience, the voice of art, the voice of an individual.

When I wrote that book, I was trying to get down to the roots of the history of Serbia and its people and trace how myths had originated and been transformed into evil, into collapse. "Look where your myths are leading you", I wanted to tell people. Take them for what they are: stories and nothing more. Don't let them turn into monstrosities. I tried to warn them. I failed.

■ **In the same book, you also write: "Evil is not in the world but in man; he alone invented it and he alone uses it."**

V. S.: Evil is just as much part of human nature as good. Before launching out into a crusade against other people's evil, one should campaign within oneself. Though evil is inherent in human nature, it is not a dominant component of our world. The proof is that the world continues to exist, whereas the ultimate aim of all evil is to destroy it.

■ **Can the writer exorcise this evil, this destructive instinct?**

V. S.: The writer says: don't let yourself be carried away by myths of death. He writes a poem about death which is a poem about life, about the beauty of living. The writer writes an endless poem about an ephemeral world.

■ **Is "Prelude to War" not also a quest for this endless poem? "Is there some story that will be never-ending . . . always ready to admit me into it and to rescue me from time, in which it would be impossible to know which sentence, page or chapter will come next?" you write, calling to mind Jorge Luis Borges's *Book of Sand*.**

V. S.: I am not a Borgesian, but perhaps you are right. All the same, don't forget that the hero of my novel asks this question but does not give an answer. Doesn't a writer write the same story in many books, in an attempt to save himself from time, from the ephemeral?

■ **Your imaginary world seems close to that of Julio Cortázar.**

V. S.: Throughout my writing life I have used a literary form that I called, before Gabriel García Márquez, "fantastic realism". It consists of lifting from reality images that can be transformed into fantasy and the surreal. Perhaps this explains why you see a parallel between my work and that of Latin American authors. I am a great admirer of Latin American literature. In the last thirty years, it has brought something really new to what we call world literature.

■ **Do you believe in the existence of a world literature?**

V. S.: Yes, in the sense of a literature that embodies receptiveness between cultures. On the other hand, I am very sceptical about the idea of "national literature", which is based ultimately on a certain isolation. If you add to that the various kinds of political climate that prevail in our part of the world, for example—political exclusivity, largely incapable leaders, intellectuals ready to lord it on their own dunghill—you get something that is simply not viable: a closed culture.

■ **The political fragmentation of Yugoslavia has led to the disintegration of its culture. What are the consequences of this?**

V. S.: I feel no nostalgia for what was called Yugoslavia. If it broke up it's because disintegration was inevitable. But I deeply regret that we have lost what was called the Yugoslav cultural area. None of the now-proclaimed "national" literatures from that area would be what it is without years of constant interpenetration with the others. I have learned a lot from Croatian, Slovene and Macedonian writers who belonged, in my opinion, to one and the same culture. That culture drew great profit from its very diversity. It is very important to have the opportunity to choose. If you lock yourself up in your little enclosure, you cease to have any choice. I think that before establishing relations between the new Balkan states, something that will not depend on writers, it is vitally important that artists should continue to collaborate, to learn from each other and even—why not?—to quarrel if their quarrels are creative.

The main ideological thesis of all nationalism in the Balkans is that a common life is impossible. That is what led to war, to the creation of nation-states, to ethnic cleansing, to crime. But each war shows those people that their thesis is crazy and without foundation. Each war shows that in the Balkans, an area which has, often wrongly, attracted many negative connotations, a common life is not only possible but absolutely indispensable. This is why I think that culture or cultures should be the precursors of reunification, not in some state or other, but intellectually. There are enough links between us to give rise to a single culture and enough differences for that culture to be strong. And that is the best thing the Balkans can offer to the world. ■

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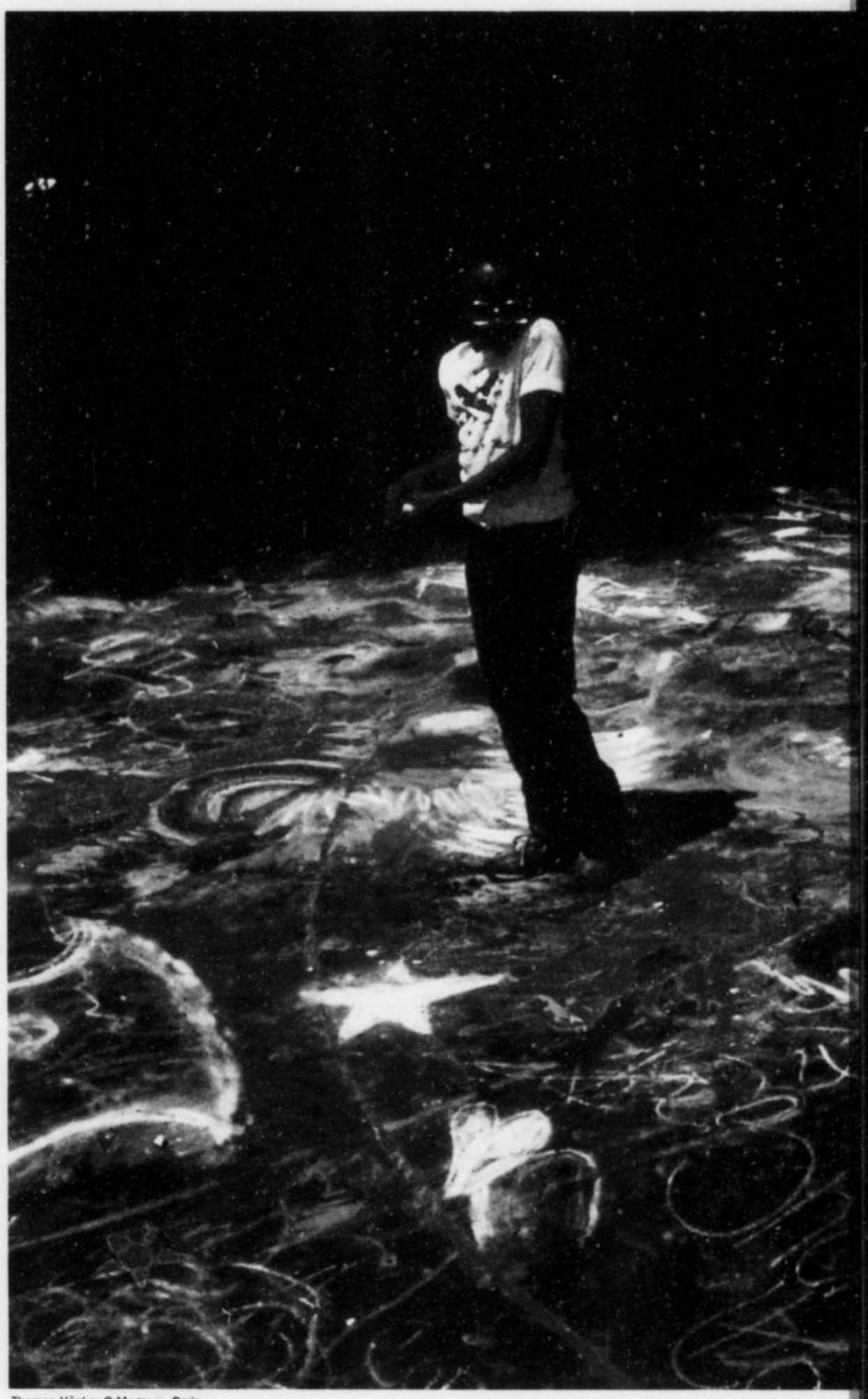
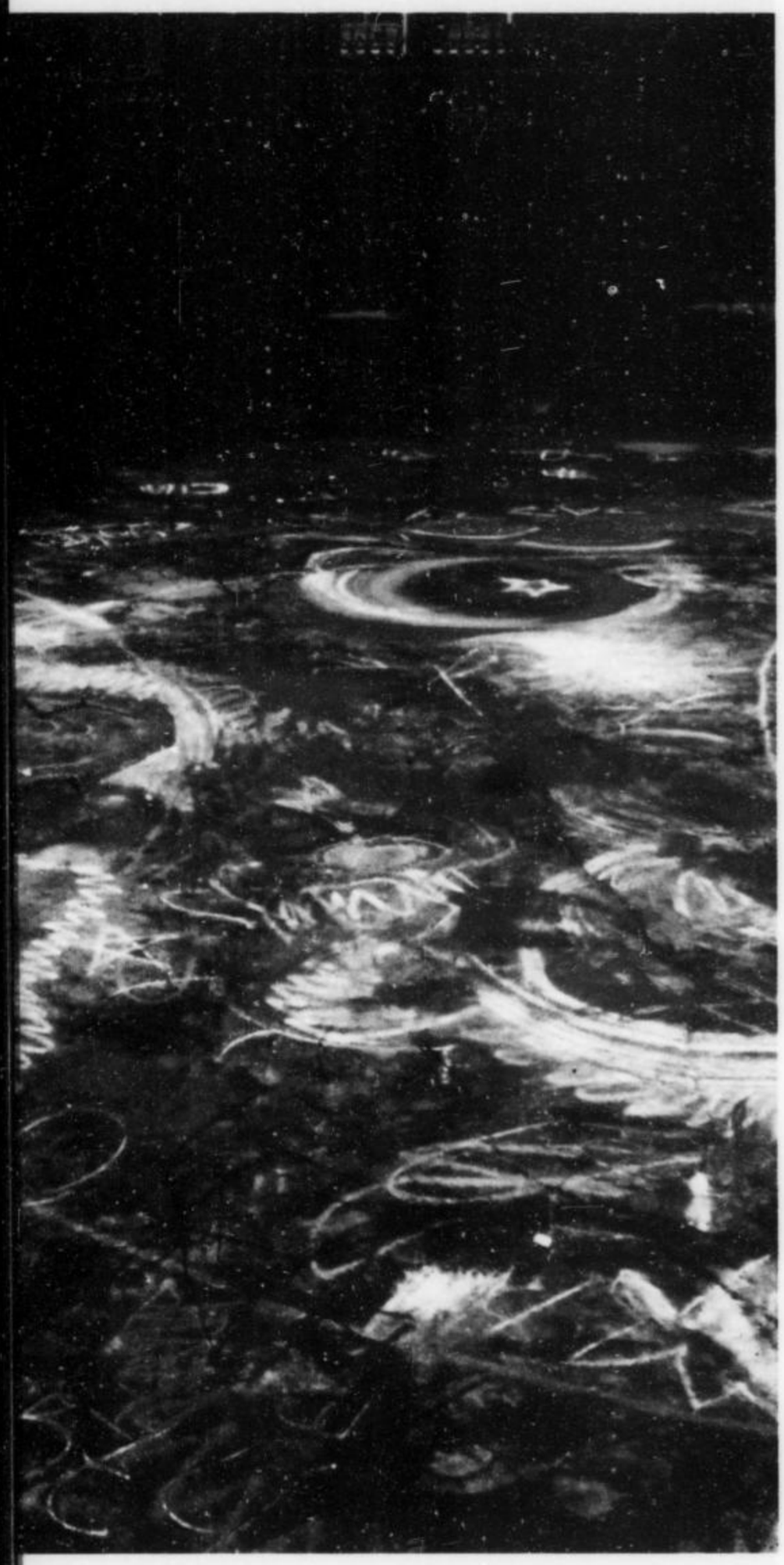
crossroads cities



Thomas Höpker © Magnum, Paris

by Bahgat Elnadi and Adel Rifaat



New York, Tangier, Bombay and the other cities profiled in this issue, have been dubbed "crossroads cities", a term which calls for some explanation. They are cities where life is particularly rich and variegated because their history has been punctuated by the arrival of successive waves of immigrants who settled in them side by side—in some cases packed closely together.

Prosperity wove the different strands of this urban population together and crisis unravelled them, but as hopes gradually mingled and memories intertwined, a sense of belonging developed, albeit one that fluctuated between solidarity and conflict. The pulse of these cities beats more intensely and more unpredictably than that of many others, but each one has acquired the knack of handling its spasms of violence and even of drawing vitality from them.

At first sight, these unusual socio-cultural excrescences seem to tell us nothing about the countries in which they are located. A closer look shows that this is not so. They have been grafted onto their nation's tissue and the graft has taken. They have grown and prospered within the nation because through a mysterious alchemy they have responded to some of its unspoken aspirations and unavowed desires.

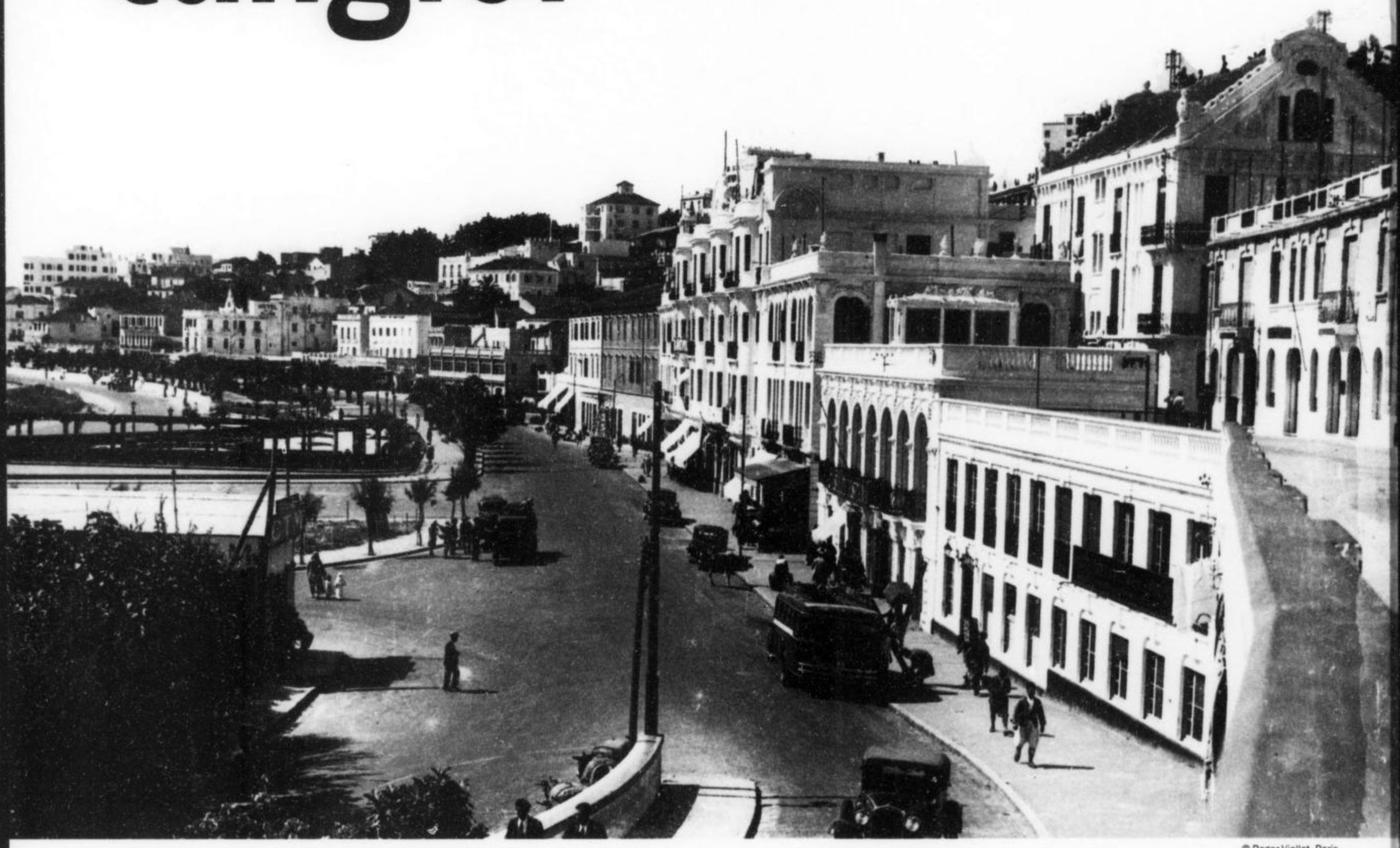
What is more, these cities have often been pacemakers of their country's modernization, sometimes in the teeth of strong opposition. It is due to them—although the debt is not always acknowledged—that their country is geared to major trading flows and to the non-stop movement of people, ideas, capital and merchandise. In a word that it keeps pace with the changing world.

They contribute to their country something far more than resources and knowledge. They instil into it the creative energy generated by the combustion of a very broad spectrum of thinking and imagination, by myriad sources of inspiration and by the revitalization of beliefs and powers of invention. And this energy seeps through hidden channels into the surrounding country, bearing much-needed antidotes to uniformity and conformism.

By virtue of the contradictions they harbour and the conflicts they foment, crossroads cities are laboratories of the future for their respective countries as they face the challenges of globalization. ■

tangier

myths and memories



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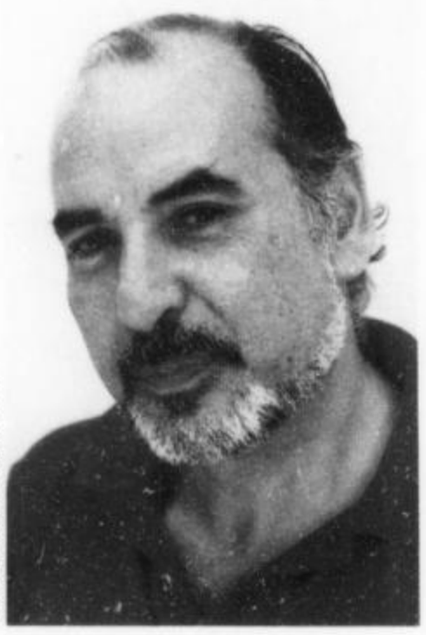
BY TAHAR BEN JELLOUN



Etienne George © Sygma, Paris

Tangier—a gateway to Africa, and a window on Europe—still draws sustenance from its myths and legends, even though the city has expanded, looks different and no longer recognizes its children. This is the fate of places marked by transience, the crossroads of history and rumour. A point of departure (of escape) and arrival, a port for easy dreams and uncertain journeys, Tangier no longer knows what to do with its reputation. The deeds and misdeeds ascribed to it are legion; so too are the clichés and fiendish images it has given rise to, and the fractured prose and obscure poetry it has inspired. It has been painted in every possible colour, and evoked in salons and galleries so often that it has become a ghost dressed in shabby silk, a crumpled postcard not fit to be sent to a friend waiting in the faraway cold.

A year after the death of Marco Polo, Ibn Batuta, who was known as "the prince of travellers", left Tangier on 14 June 1325 (he was born there in 1304) on the journeys that would take him several times round the then known world. He did not often feel homesick for the city, but he was haunted by its image. Its perfumes and smells followed him everywhere, conjuring up the memory of a peaceful community where nothing untoward ever occurred. He wrote that Morocco, "the land where I wore the amulets of childhood and where the dust first touched my skin", was the best of all countries. In the travel notebooks (*Rihla*) which he dictated, there were few references to Tangier, which had not yet become a crossroads. It was above all a port from which people set out to explore the world or seek adventure.

■ *The painter's eye*

In 1832, Eugène Delacroix stayed in Tangier before going on to Meknès, Fez and other places. He was welcomed everywhere and did not conceal his surprise or his sense of wonder. "I have now arrived in Tangier," he noted. "I have just made a tour of the city and I am full of astonishment at all I have seen. I would need twenty arms, and days forty-eight hours

long, to give an account of it all. . . . At the moment, I am like a man in a dream who sees things which he fears will escape his grasp. . . ."

Through the good offices of Abraham Benchimol, an interpreter at the French Consulate, he was able to obtain an introduction to Jewish society in Tangier which gave him the opportunity to paint his celebrated *Jewish Wedding*. In a letter to his friend Pierret dated 25 January 1832, he wrote: "The Jewish women are admirable. I am afraid that it would be difficult to do anything but paint them: they are pearls of Eden".

Later on, another French painter, Henri Matisse, came to Tangier, where he stayed at the Hôtel Villa de France. At first, torrential rainfall kept him confined to his room. Since he had come for the sun and the light, he almost gave in to disappointment and thought of returning to France. Fortunately, he decided to stay until the weather turned fine. That year, 1912, marked a new direction and dimension in his work. The light of Tangier was a revelation to him.

Other painters have spent time in Tangier. Today the Chilean Claudio Bravo lives and works there. He seldom emerges from his beautiful house at the foot of the "Vieille Montagne" and he paints the people and objects of Tangier in a hyper-realistic manner which cannot be reduced to orientalism or exoticism. Claudio Bravo paints the meeting of two civilizations. He turns this place into a crossroads where different ways of seeing and being, different visions of the world and sensibilities, and a mix of different temperaments all confront each other. In fact, his attraction and respect for Moroccan popular culture have made it virtually the main subject of his work.

■ *An international city*

For some forty years, until 1957, Tangier had the status of an international city. What did that mean for its inhabitants? Although it had a representative of the royal authority, the city was administered by several different countries. However, the most widely spoken language, apart from Arabic, was Spanish, and the most widely used currency was the peseta. Other currencies could be exchanged in booths on the rue Siaghine, between the jewellers and the bazaar stall-holders. There were as many schools as there were countries represented in the city. Young Moroccans had the choice between the Spanish Institute and the Italian school, the ▸

Left, Avenue d'Espagne in the 1930s.

***Jewish Wedding in Morocco* (1839), oil on canvas by Eugène Delacroix.**

© Giraudon, Paris/Louvre Museum, Paris

Christian Sappa © Rapho, Paris

General view of Tangier.

American school and the French lycée. At this time cosmopolitanism was a lifestyle, multilingualism was not encumbered by the problem of identity, and the Muslims of Tangier lived in the same neighbourhoods as the Christians and the Jews. The Calle Sevilla was known as the Spaniards' street, but Muslims lived in the same buildings side-by-side with the Spaniards and there was no feeling of mistrust between the two. It was a time when Moroccans wondered how nearby Spain, a fairly poor country, could be capable of colonizing them. They did not ask this question about the French, who did not mix with the others and often behaved in an overbearing manner.

This period when the city had an international status witnessed the arrival of more traffickers, gangsters, forgers and insolvent or ruined businessmen than artists. Yet the 1950s were prolific years for the group of Beat Generation poets who discovered Tangier and turned it into a centre for writing, pick-ups and a total change of scene. Allen Ginsberg, William Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Paul Bowles and Tennessee Williams all came together to smoke hash, party and improvise poetry performances.

Jean Genet did not mix with this set, even though he knew most of the poets. He did not like Tangier, which he compared to the French Riviera And yet he wrote in *The Thief's Journal*: "This city (Tangier) represented Betrayal for me so well and so magnificently that I felt I had no option but to come ashore here".

How did a gathering place of travellers, traders, diplomats, gangsters and exiles come to symbolize what Jean Genet called "Betrayal"? It is probably because this port opening on the West, washed by two seas, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, this myth which still preserves some Roman remains, this route to other places, is a stage where life and death are played out, where old actors take refuge in retirement, where writers fixed in the past compose nostalgic laments for a Tangier which no longer exists.

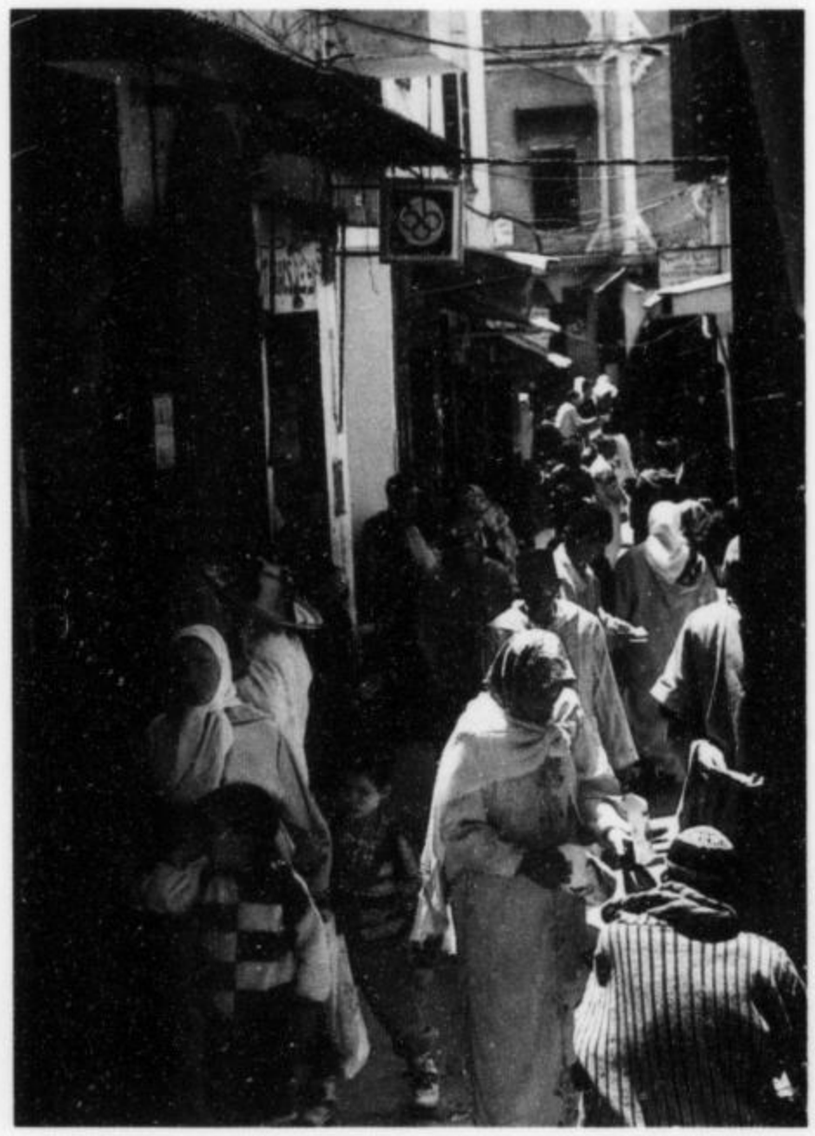
■ *Fading romance*

This memory of a city with its special status still finds a refuge among people of another age, outlasting the dampness of the tired walls, the gusts of the East wind and the eternal spirit of hope which one day will save Tangier from decay. It is in this sense that the city is romantic, destined to appear in works of fiction or fantasies stalked by mystery.

Over the past thirty years, until a major clean-up campaign was launched early in 1996, a parallel clandestine economy linked to "mint" (kif) trafficking was concentrated in Tangier. Traffickers, smugglers and even government officials were arrested and tried. At the same time, a relentless struggle began against the smugglers of human beings: people trying to emigrate. Tangier had become the last stage for those who hoped to cross the straits of Gibraltar and find work in Spain or elsewhere. People came

Jean Valentin © Explorer, Paris

A café in the Socco district.



Christian Sappa © Rapho, Paris

Market scene in the *casbah*, the high part of town.

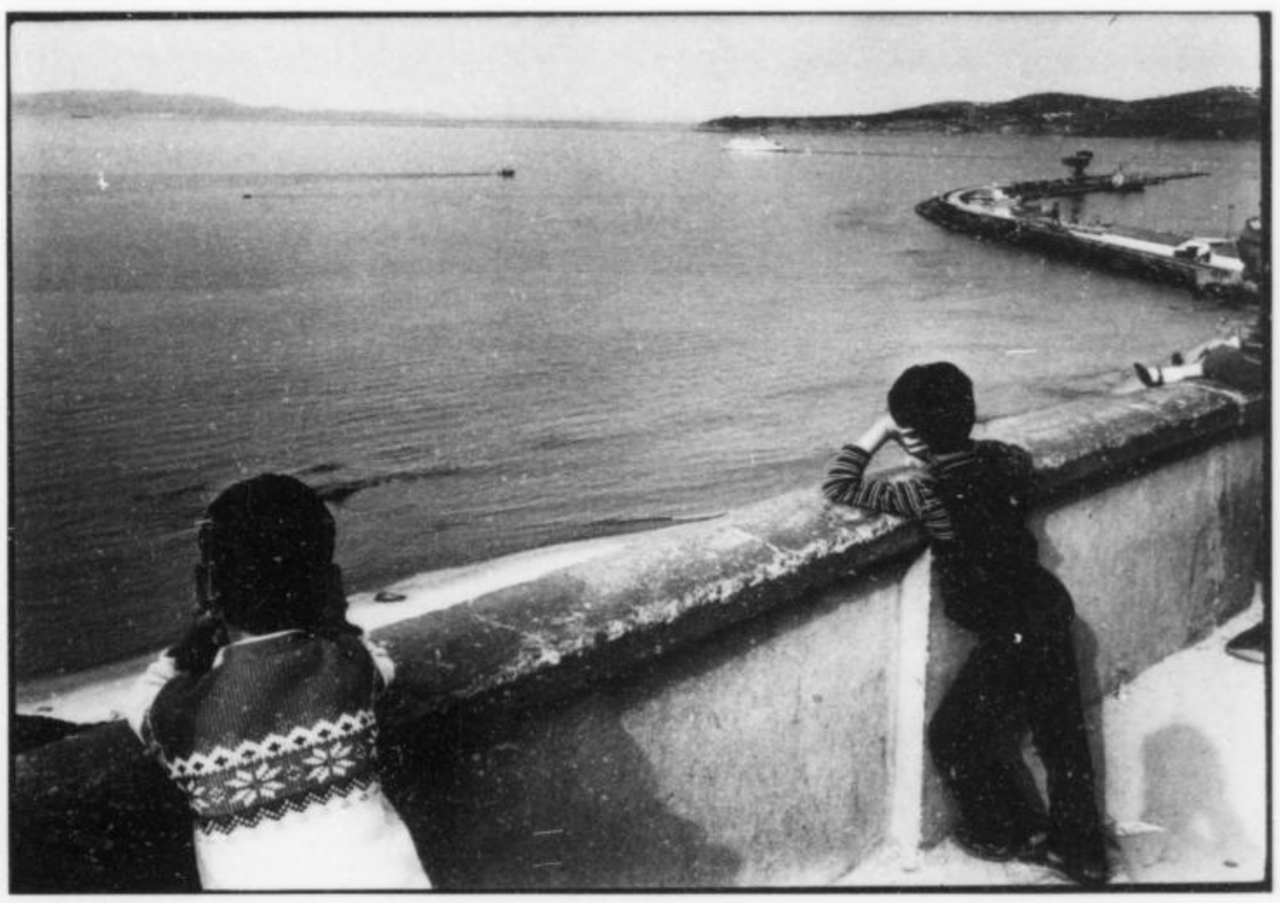
Didier Dorval © Explorer, Paris

A scene in the *medina*, the old town.

from all over, from southern Morocco and even from certain African countries, to embark at night on boats belonging to unscrupulous fishermen.

The city has grown. So-called "popular and spontaneous" new districts have mushroomed on the outskirts. Beni Makada, which was a huge shantytown, has become an almost new and respectable quarter, where the buildings are now all solidly built. Casabarata is no longer a shantytown, either. Tangier is no longer confined to the old city, the Casbah, Marshan and the cattle market—the residential area along the road to the "Grande Montagne". Tangier is spreading in length and breadth. The city's old families are isolated and in a minority. Perhaps that is why they are not managing to make their voices heard and to fight for the future of their city.

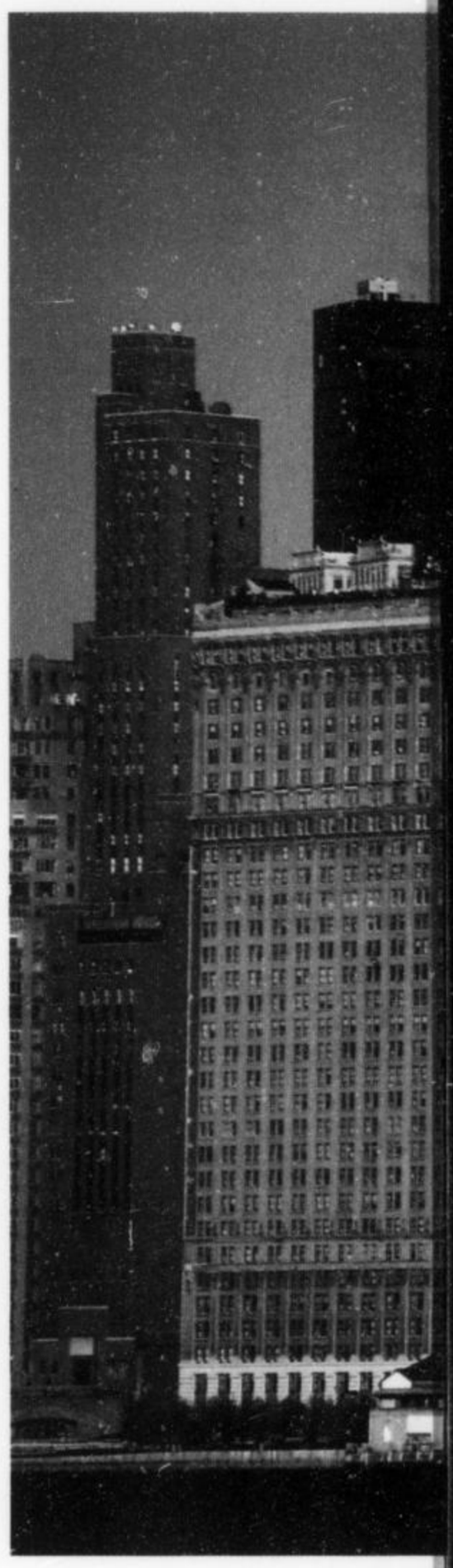
The port seen from the medina.



Pierre Olivier Deschamps © Vu, Paris

Tangier is starting to lose its identity as a crossroads, a place of trade and cross-fertilization, and is coming to resemble any other modern Moroccan city. Fortunately, there are artists, most of them foreign, who still have a passion for the city. Some of them live there permanently, others come several times a year. Neither they nor the people of the city can understand or explain the attraction for this port which can often seem shabby or commonplace. Someone encapsulated this feeling in the phrase: "I can't explain why I love this city, but I know why I don't love it!" Apparently, love wins over everything else and people keep coming in spite of the wind and the decay, the annoyances of everyday life and the spectacle of a city adrift. ■

new york *blues*



BY JEROME CHARYN

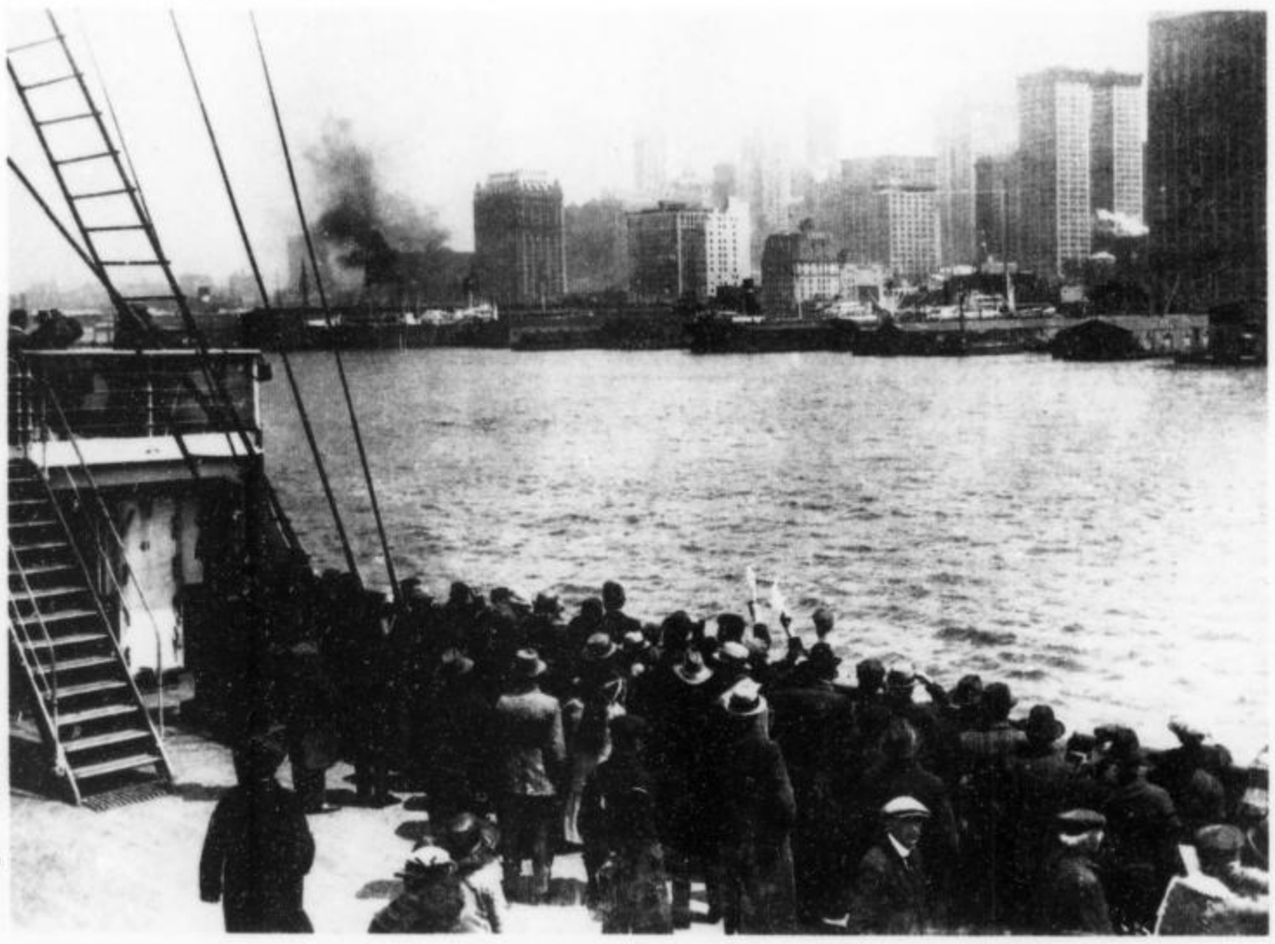
© S. Bassouls/Sygma, Paris

New York is a city that breathes fairness and barks against inequality. It's this that has made it the marvel of the twentieth century, not its skyscrapers or its billionaires. New York's skyscrapers have lost their lyrical line, and no billionaire has ever really made a dent in the city's chaotic heart. New York is the only city on the planet where the lower depths fought against the rich, established order and won.

These lower depths arrived in the form of the Irish, who tossed the Protestant majority out of city government and became the boss of Manhattan right after the Civil War, around 1865. The Irish were never bankers or brokers, and they rarely built mansions on Fifth Avenue or anywhere else, but they were firemen and cops and schoolteachers, mechanics, gangsters, and politicians, who practised their own rude democracy, stealing from the city and also educating and feeding the poor. And when the first immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in the 1870s, the Irish enlisted them in their own anarchic political machine. The greenhorns voted for Irish mayors and aldermen before they could even spell their own names.

Wave after wave of immigrants soon followed the same example—Italians, Ukrainians, Greeks, Polish, Russian, and Romanian Jews, Magyars, Albanians, Slovaks, Serbs, who helped create their own turbulent tribal orchestra until the National Origins Act of 1924 cut off the flow of "mongrels" from Eastern Europe. But not even the anti-immigrant hysteria of the United States Congress could really change the complexion of the vitality of immigrant New York. The "mongrels" had learnt

An ocean liner arriving in New York harbour circa 1925.



© Harlingue-Viollet, Paris

S. Fautre © Ask Images, Paris

The southern tip of Manhattan.

English, could interpret all the complex signs and signals of the metropolis, could gather capital for their own enterprises, could buy their own seats on the New York Stock Exchange. Even more important, they helped school their own and other people's children without rancour or a sense of exclusion.

New York in the 1930s, in the midst of the Great Depression, was still the most democratic place on earth. It encouraged the very idea of rebellion, the sacredness of individual rights, the belief that any government which did not serve these rights should and could be driven out of office. Even Hollywood understood this ethos and capitalized on it. In film after film—*The Bowery* (1934), *Dead End* (1937), *Angels with Dirty Faces* (1938), *City for Conquest* (1940)—New Yorkers are depicted as an unruly lot, women, children, and old men who provide their own liberty and law. This ethos even reached as far as Rick's Cafe (*Casablanca*, 1943), where Rick Blaine (Humphrey Bogart) warns a German major (Conrad Veidt) that if the Nazis ever got near Rick's old neighbourhood of Hell's Kitchen, they had better run for their lives.

But there are no Rick Blaines today. Is the City becoming a kind of behemoth as it approaches a new century? Its public schools are dying. It cannot seem to educate its young, teach them the most basic skills, or convince them that the city is *there* for them. New York's crisis of faith has become the crisis of every large American city. The poor have lost their place. They cannot negotiate for themselves in this labyrinth. Since 1965, three million ▸

▸ immigrants have arrived in New York, most of them non-white: Jamaicans, Dominicans, Mexicans, Koreans, Pakistanis, Indians, Chinese, who have formed their own tribes and entered into the fabric of New York, but it's not the same democratic family. Blacks and whites are further apart than they ever were, in spite of "integration." Young black males have become an endangered species in New York. They cannot survive the system's shabby public housing and shitty public schools.

No one, not even the most passionate New Yorker, seems capable of dealing with that heartless dividing line between whites and blacks. Poor blacks (and Latinos) have fallen

E. Hartmann © Magnum, Paris

Thomas Höpker © Magnum, Paris

Chantal Regnault © Explorer, Paris

Top, immigrants take the oath of allegiance during a naturalization ceremony in New York City.

Above, a meeting of "Guardian Angels", volunteers who patrol the New York subway.

Left, street scene in New York City's Chinatown.

outside America's vocabulary. They are, as novelist Ralph Ellison described over forty years ago, invisible women and men. It doesn't really matter that some blacks have escaped the ghetto to have fabulous careers as rap singers, generals, actors and actresses, comedians, boxers, basketball and baseball players. The others have been left woefully behind. And the despair, paranoia, and depression get worse and worse. The overwhelming majority of all prisoners in New York State come from the poorest black and Latino neighbourhoods in New York City. These neighbourhoods, like Harlem and Brownsville and the South Bronx, are the ghastliest sort of ghettos, where crime

begets crime, where the walls of every block are filled with painted elegies to fallen black and Latino warriors. This is the fastest-growing art coming out of the ghettos. And the young artists who are painting these testimonials are sought out everywhere. It's ironic and sad that their only real capital is death.

The South Bronx has become the worst of the little laboratories of crime. The police are quite proud that they have been able to use the same federal statutes that trapped Mafia chieftains like John Gotti to go after the black and Latino gangs of the South Bronx and toss them into jail. The exploits of these crusading cops were written up in *The New Yorker*'s

© Charles Lénars, Paris

Chantal Regnault © Explorer, Paris

Above, New York's Indian community celebrates Indian Independence day (15 August) on Fifth Avenue.

Right, a city playground.

Below, a Chinatown grocery store.

Gérard Boutin © Explorer, Paris

"Talk of the Town" column, which praised Walter Arsenault, chief of the Homicide Investigation Unit, "a small team of detectives and prosecutors which specializes in large gang busts and has not lost a single case in its ten-year history." Arsenault, whose uniform is a pair of blue jeans and a white oxford shirt, is like a wizard who can rattle off the nicknames of every defendant in a particular case—"Chicken, Foodhead, Pacqualito, Popcorn, Dominican David." But is the South Bronx or Brownsville in better shape without "Popcorn" and "Dominican David"? I doubt it.

As soon as one gang is pulled off the street, another gang forms. It's all part of the same ▶

implacable beast, that Hydra's head of depravation that keeps fattening itself on other people. The police can only solve problems in a community by being part of that community, by living in it, by sharing its despair, bathing in its stink. But the cops never live in the communities they patrol and rarely have a stake in them. They are often part of the corruption that helps destroy a community, in spite of Walter Arsenault's heroics.

The South Bronx always had its gangs, even sixty years ago, when the gangs were mostly white, and the cops who dealt with them often came out of the very same gangs. Then and now, the poor had to have their colours, their territories, their little flags, declaring that they were outlaws in a world that was largely indifferent to them and their designs. To some degree, it was an educative process, a means whereby a gang could talk to itself and other gangs, find a common language. I'm not dismissing the plunder and mayhem of any gang, past or present. But most often, the gangs fed off their own entrails and still do. Their common language still unites them; it's the only schooling many of them will ever have—either the old Fordham Baldies or today's La Compania, Wild Cowboys, and Jheri Curls.

The police had better learn to understand the dynamics of the gangs and their will to survive, or they themselves and the city of New York will not survive the gangs, which are already taking over and "educating" the jailhouses they are in.

New York itself has become an enormous jailhouse, where the rich have their isolated "free" zones, and the poor are tucked away in ghettos that are growing larger every day. Captured gangs will not make the problems disappear, only the deepest compassion and a commitment to overcome white and black paranoia can possibly change things. New York is like any other nation involved in internecine warfare, and that warfare has to be stopped. It will not come with crime statistics which claim that homicide is going up or down. Statistics always lie. They're the baldest, cruelest propaganda. Crime will go down when New Yorkers feel themselves to be a family again. It might start to happen right now, as young artists, white and black, invade bombed-out areas in search of cheaper rent. But will they involve themselves with the poor? Or will they recreate "fashionable" neighbourhoods that will only drive up the rent and oblige the poor to plunge into yet another ghetto? No one really knows.

But I'm always the optimist. Like any Depression baby (I was born in 1937), I still believe in fairness. And no magical policeman in blue jeans will ever take that away. ■

Right, film stars parade through crowded Bombay streets in a fund-raising campaign for hurricane victims.

Joe Viesti © Ask Images, Paris

Sunbathing during lunch break in the business district.

Bruno Barbey © Magnum, Paris

BOMBAY *one and many*

BY LAJPAT RAI JAGGA

Bombay, the gateway to India, is a city of contrasts. On the one hand, the dazzling interiors of its five star deluxe hotels; on the other the poverty and squalor of its slums. The capital of Indian finance and films, it is a city of hope and despair, evoking desire and promising a future, however illusory, to all who come to its shores. The rags to riches stories that abound in Bombay films recreate the myths of its dream world.

■ *The European connection*

Legend has it that Bombay, or "Mumbai", derives its name from Mumbadevi, the goddess worshipped by the Kolis, the earliest inhabitants of the archipelago on which the city is situated. It is probable, however, that the city derived its modern name from the Portuguese, to whom it was ceded in 1534 by the Sultan of Gujarat, and who called it "Bom Bahia", the beautiful bay. In 1661, it was given as a marriage gift to Charles II, the king of England, by his queen, Catherine of Portugal. Its territories then consisted of seven islands, interspersed by swampy, low-lying areas, eighteen kilometres long and seven wide, with Malabar Hill rising to sixty metres above the sea, and the island of Colaba as a narrow jutting headland. A nineteenth-century traveller wrote that, "Bombay harbour presents one of the most splendid landscapes imaginable", with "its gemlike islands reflected in the broad blue waters" of the Arabian Sea.

Evidence of human activity in the archipelago goes back a long way. The early Buddhist ▸

▸ grottoes of Kanheri date from the second century A.D. Hindu grottoes and the sixth-eighth-century caves of Elephanta testify to a rich cultural heritage. However, the region owes its early economic development to the coming of the Parsis, who arrived there from Iran in the eighth century.

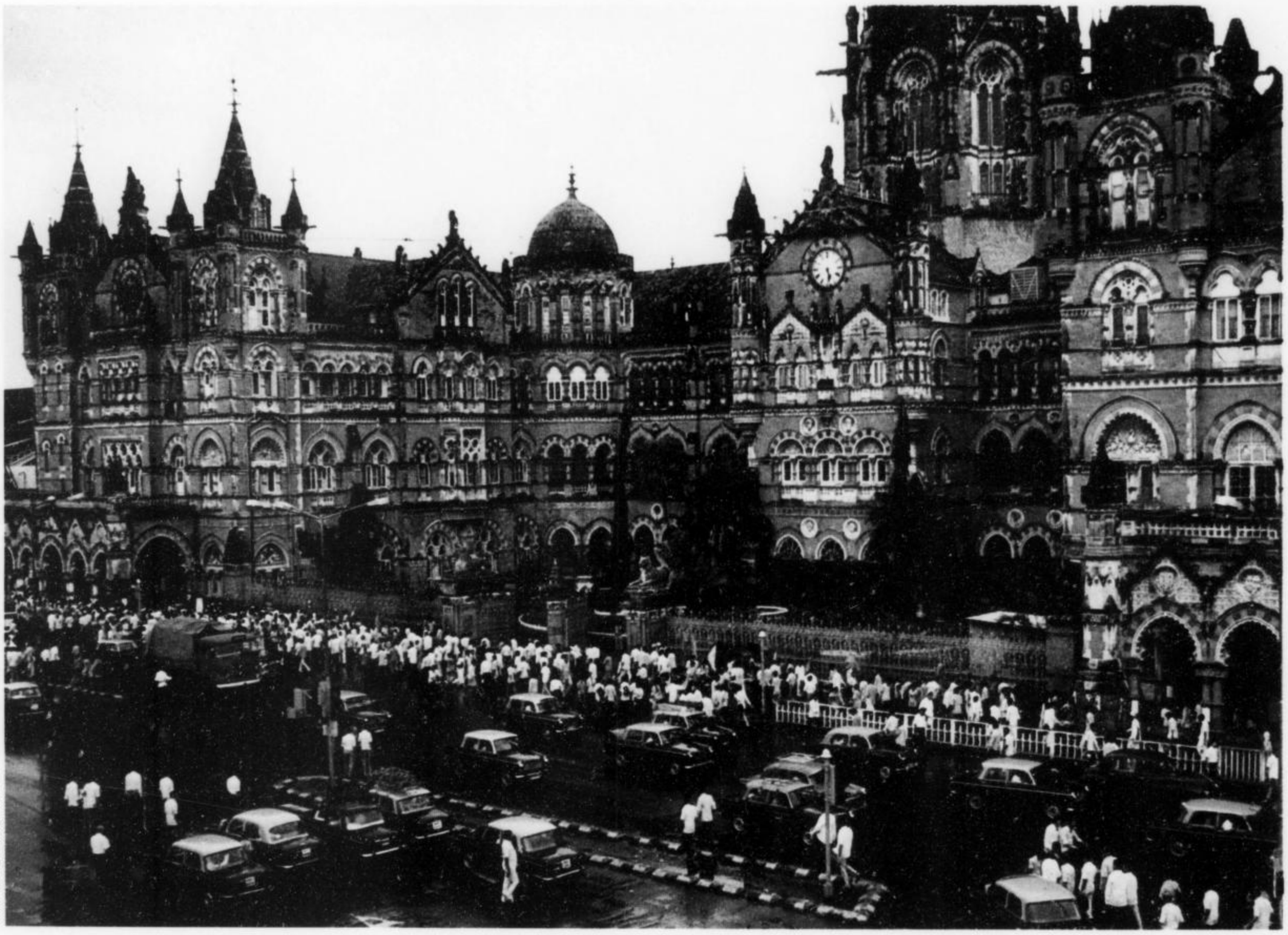
Starting in the seventeenth century, European settlement on the west coast of India—the French in Cochin and Mahe, the Portuguese in Goa, Dieu and Daman, and the English in Bombay, Baroda and Surat—transformed the landscape, architecture, economy and life-style of the inhabitants. The English presence was the main catalyst of cultural and economic transition in the Bombay region. Rich merchant communities that had been settled for centuries in the hinterland moved to the ports, and Bombay became the focus of this movement of indigenous culture and wealth. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 greatly enhanced Bombay's status as a port on the Arabian Sea, and its rail links with the hinterland made it the hub of all India.

Since the 1860s the Bombay economy has been based on cotton—its export and the manufacture of cloth. With the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861, and the consequent "cotton famine", Bombay suddenly emerged with a virtual monopoly of the world cotton trade. Its merchants acquired wealth, land and prosperity surpassing that possessed by the colonial masters. Here in Bombay, amongst its culturally diverse merchant communities and its modern cosmopolitan intelligentsia, was born the idea of freedom.

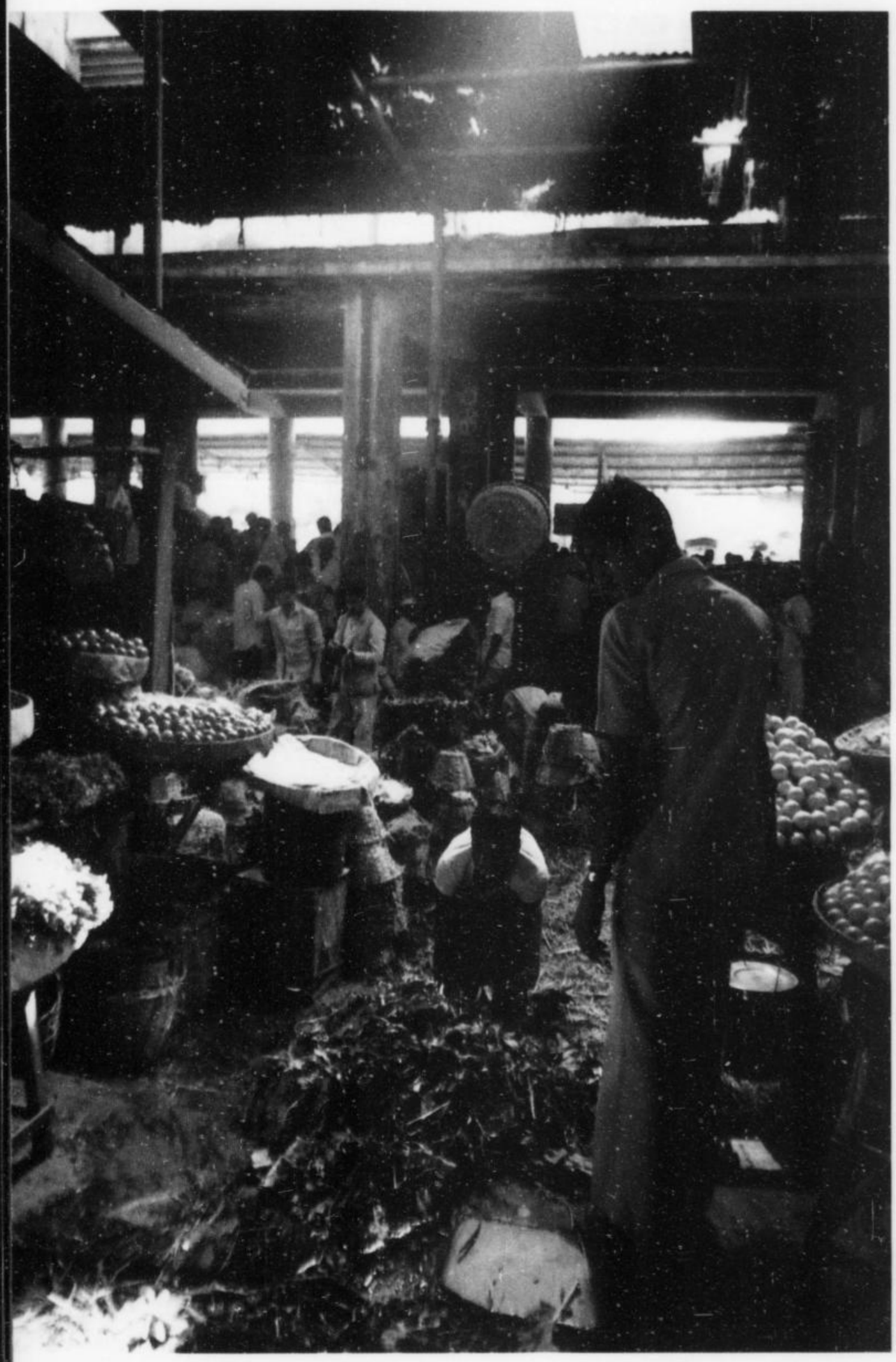
■ *A blend of architectural styles*

While the growth of indigenous business and finance made Bombay a hub of trade, the avant garde movement in nationalist ideas, films and architecture made it the cultural capital of India. In the course of the nineteenth century Bombay evolved a typically Indian style in architecture, and later in films and in the development of a composite culture that no other city of the British Empire could boast of. In architecture the Raj tried to impose its heavy Gothic style, as can be seen in the gigantic façades of the Victoria terminus and the city hall. The merchant communities, mainly the Parsis, tried to blend modern European and traditional forms. The American historian of urbanism Norma Evenson has pointed out that a striking feature of nineteenth-century

Victoria Station. "Mogul" features complement the Victorian neo-Gothic style.



Bruno Barbey © Magnum, Paris



© Carlos Freire, Paris

Above, the Hindu market near Victoria Station.

Right, a Bombay street scene.

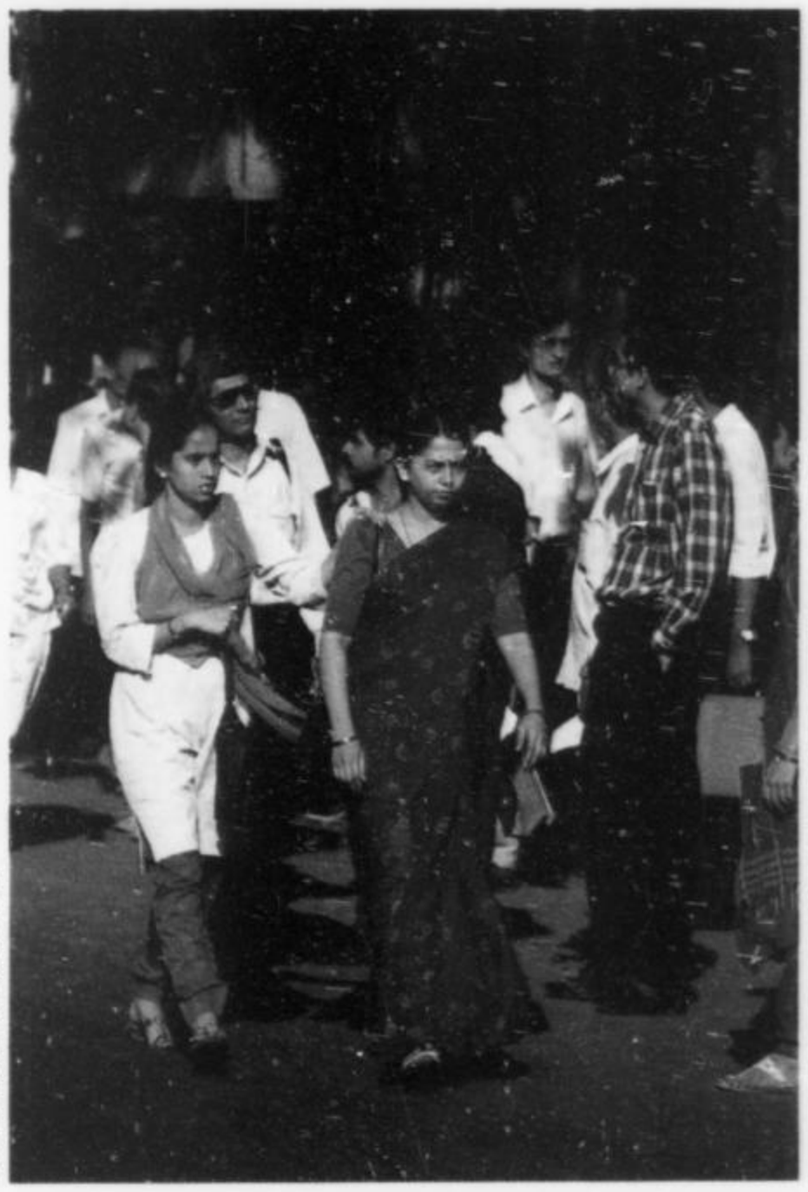
private building in Bombay was "its decorative carving, a quality that linked it with the traditional Gujarati architecture", while its five- or six-storied buildings reproduced "the character and charm of older centres of population" such as Amritsar, Lahore or old Delhi. The creativity of this style is illustrated by "airy balconies enriched with graceful carvings and painted in all colours of the rainbow". The façade style of older houses, with traditional woodwork, has been "compared to that of the Ionian Greeks".* This blending of architectural styles in nineteenth-century Bombay was a part of the modern movement and the city has continued to be an open window to the outside world.

For over a century, Bombay has attracted people from all over India, from all walks of life to come to live and share the gentle soothing winds of the Arabian Sea and the melodies of the Hindi film song. Bombay today has a population of nearly twelve million inhabitants, but it has always been a city of crowds, a mix of many communities, cultures and languages. Land was always scarce, and as early as the 1890s the Back Bay reclamation was started; it still continues today. Reclamation and the intermixture of socio-cultural groups may sum up a century of Bombay's social history.

A pole of attraction

Each social group has brought to the city its richness and diversity, creating an environment of tolerance and sharing. A person may come from anywhere in India or the world, here he or she is a Bombaywala, and speaks a mixture of many languages. Whether people sleep on the pavement, live in the slums or reside in a Bungalow (big house) in Bandra, they all share the city, its dreamy films, its walks such as the Marine Drive, and its beaches—the Chaupati and Juhu. Over the years, however, differences of community, religion and social class have begun to plague Bombay, as much as they have other cities of northern India.

Nearly 70 per cent of the people of Bombay are Hindus of diverse castes, sects and beliefs. In recent years, however, the Maharathi-speaking 45 per cent have begun to dominate ▸



Bertrand Gardel © Hémisphères, Paris

▸ the city's political life. Nevertheless, the Gujarati, Sindhi, Punjabi or Marwari Hindu merchant communities play an important role in the city's economy. Nearly 15 per cent of the population is Muslim. The Bohras and Khojas are the more important business groups, and their leader, Prince Aga Khan, is an international figure. The Parsis, once Bombay's most important community, are now in decline, but still have a national presence in the Tatas, India's most powerful industrial-financial group. There are large numbers of Christians, mainly Catholics, and there is also a small Jewish community. Although the Jains and Sikhs intermarry with the Hindus, they have a separate cultural identity and exercise considerable influence. Bombay's population also includes oil-rich Arab sheikhs, Buddhists, Armenians, Chinese and Europeans, who have made the city their home and contribute to its cultural texture.

Bombay is not only a city of the rich or the middle classes. It has attracted millions of aspiring young people from all over the subcontinent. They speak different languages, Konkani, Tamil, Kanard, Behari, Punjabi and the beautiful tribal dialects. They all come to Bombay in search of a livelihood, to live close to the sea, and be a part of the dance, drama and colour of its film world.

■ *Necessary contradictions?*

Each socio-cultural group has brought to the city its place of worship, lifestyle, social customs and habits, and has left historical monuments as a testimony of a composite culture. The Hindus—Marathi and Gujarati merchants—gather at the ancient temple of Walkeshwar (god of sand) on Malabar Hill, or the temple of Mahalakshmi (goddess of wealth), near which there is a mosque built in the memory of Haji Ali, a Muslim saint. In Worli is a Buddhist temple and the basilica of Mount Mary, one of Bombay's twenty Catholic churches. On the Back Bay, near the Dhabi Hat, is the principal temple of the Jains. In another part of Malabar Hill are the Dakhmas, "towers of Silence", the place of disposal of the dead of the Parsis. Bombay also has many Gurudwaras, Sikh places of worship.

Each community celebrates its religious festivals: the Hindu Diwali, the festival of light and Ganesh Chaturthi; the Muslim Muharram; the Catholics' annual festival of Mount May. For over a century these communities have lived a shared life of mutual respect for each other's religion and belief, but cracks have begun to appear in this tightly woven social fabric.

The partition of India in 1947 left wounds—riots, internecine killings of Hindus and Muslims which the passage of time has not healed. Communal tensions elsewhere in India, as in the case of the demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya in December 1992, have sparked off sectarian religious emotions and riots. But more alarming is the growth of a sectarian organization, the Shiv Sena, which has used political rhetoric—Bombay only for the Maharashtrians—to win votes. A narrow regionalism, coupled with sectarian religious sentiments, could destroy the healthy mix of cultures that Bombay has come to represent for the rest of India. *Bombay*, a recent Hindi film directed by Mani Ratnam, shows the predicament of this city of cultural intermixture. It depicts the love story of a Muslim boy and a Hindu girl, a saga of the reconciliation of cultures of which Bombay is a living symbol. ■

* Norma Evenson, *Indian Metropolis, A View Towards the West,* Yale University Press, 1989.

An improvised ball game in the Panier district during a day off school.

© Claude Sauvageot, Paris

Modern buildings in Bombay's waterfront business district.

MARSEILLES

Sébastien Boffredo © Vu, Paris

port of call and recall

BY EMILE TEMIME

It is the destiny of Marseilles to be a crossroads, a place of transit and a refuge. Merchants, travellers, migrants and merchandise meet in this city whose hinterland spreads out along rivers and roads, this mythic place that opens its arms to the Mediterranean world. Once a colonial port, it has lived primarily from the passage of people and goods whose diversity has shaped its long and eventful history.

In the nineteenth century, a revival of commercial and industrial activity attracted businessmen from northern Europe to Marseilles, in accordance with a process that already existed before the French Revolution, when the city enjoyed privileges that made it a meeting point between traders—particularly Germanic traders—and ships that brought silk and spices from the East or were engaged in the lucrative West Indian traffic. This economic revival also attracted Piedmontese, migrants from the French Alps, and Ligurian sailors who found temporary work in Marseilles and in due course settled down there.

Later, after 1870, the Mediterranean was the theatre of the great westward migration ▸

© Roger-Viollet, Paris

The Old Port in the late nineteenth century.

Market scene in the Old Port, today a pleasure boat marina.

▶ of Italians, Greeks, Armenians and Levantines towards the American Eldorado. For many of these migrants, Marseilles was merely a stopover, albeit a lengthy one in some cases. Its population remained predominantly European, but it was a cosmopolitan city, and after the completion of the Suez Canal it became more receptive than ever to all kinds of outside trends and influences.

The following decades saw the arrival of newcomers who gradually gave shape to the Marseilles mosaic as we know it today. The great influx of Armenians in the 1920s was triggered by the violence and revolutions that shook eastern Europe and the Middle East. The use of "colonial" labour, starting early in the twentieth century, brought to the Old Port workers from the Far East, the shores of the Indian Ocean (Somalis and Malagasy), black Africa and, above all, from North Africa. Marseilles industrialists were the first in France to use Algerian workers. This flow of North African workers was slowed neither by colonial wars nor by decolonization, after which large numbers of "repatriated" French made their way to Marseilles.

As a result of colonialism Algerians, Tunisians and Moroccans came to constitute the majority of "foreigners". In the 1970s Comorians joined the Senegalese and Malians who had long been settled in the city. There have been sporadic inflows of Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians. The decline in ocean shipping and passenger traffic since 1960 does not seem to have had any immediate impact on the city's multi-faceted identity.

But an idyllic portrait of Marseilles would be inappropriate. Terms like diversity, tolerance, and acceptance of others should be handled with care. There is a longstanding mistrust of newcomers. Divisions have always existed, and sometimes minority groups have been treated as outsiders.

■ *Living together*

Two centuries ago, many Catalonian fishermen left Marseilles as a result of legal proceedings. Anti-Italian demonstrations at the end of the nineteenth century provoked a temporary exodus of Italians. More recently, violence in 1973 against Algerians spread fear and caused some departures. But all these episodes were short-lived and did not jeopardize an accepted and on-going cohabitation.

Coexistence is not always synonymous with community. Crossroads are not necessarily places where people really meet. One reason for this, in the case of Marseilles, is that many people do not stay long in what is above all a place of transit. All that many newcomers have known of Marseilles is life in furnished accommodation or transit camps, their presence hardly noticed by the city's permanent population. I am thinking of the colonial workers housed for years in the Lyautey and Viet Nam camps of south Marseilles, of Jews from North Africa and the survivors of the concentration camps and ghettos of central Europe after the Second World War, many of whom lived in the "Grand Arénas".

Luc Girard © Explorer, Paris

But even people who settle permanently in the city do not always become part of the community. Barriers remain. Ethnicity persists not only because of rejection but because of the bonds created by a common origin and a common language and because of a basic need for security and communication. The people of Marseilles long dubbed "Belle-de-Mai" and "Saint-Henri" in the northern part of town, and "Menpenti" and "La Capelette" in the east, as "Italian neighbourhoods". Later, Armenians settled on the edge of the city at "Beaumont" and "Saint-Antoine". They did not constitute the entire population of these areas, but there were quite a few of them, and their sense of solidarity was strong enough to identify them with the neighbourhoods they lived in. Such identification may last longer than the demographic situation really warrants.

Divisions sometimes even persist when the reasons for them have disappeared. In the inter-war years, for instance, Italians and Corsicans lived side by side in the "Panier" neighbourhood, in the old town overlooking the sea. They understood each other; their cultural ▸

Laurent Giraudou © Hémisphères, Paris

Prado Beach.

backgrounds were fairly similar; and they lived in more less the same conditions. Many of them did the same kind of work. Yet a closer look reveals that for twenty years there were Corsican streets and Neapolitan streets, Corsican cafés and Italian cafés.

The many places of worship, often in the same neighbourhood, demonstrate a de facto tolerance and mutual acceptance that are actively encouraged by the authorities. Their number is synonymous with coexistence but not necessarily with dialogue. The longstanding diversity of Christian churches is now matched by that of Jewish and Muslim places of worship, with their distinctive congregations and rites.

So it is not in the city's nature to erase cultural differences, and the steady turnover of its population probably helps to maintain and even strengthen traditions that might eventually have disappeared with the appearance of new allegiances.

■ *Multiple allegiances*

These allegiances, which transcend national and religious boundaries, are largely based on the jobs people do. This is true for all levels of society.

Trade is the mainstay of the city's wealth and has from very early times encouraged people of different origins and beliefs to combine their efforts and work together. The very small French Protestant middle-class community has played a role quite disproportionate to its size. Some surprising alliances have been made. In the nineteenth century, for example, the Altaras, a devout Jewish family, combined with a militant Catholic family, the Caunes, to found an arms company.

At about the same time, Greek merchants achieved notable status among the leading citizens of Marseilles, although at the outset they did not take French nationality. Technicians and engineers from Britain, Germany and Switzerland also provided their expertise and made a contribution to the city's modernization.

More recently, fortunes of another kind have been built on new networks and businesses arising from North African initiatives. In Belsunce, the business district of central Marseilles, the fabric of commerce has been woven, unravelled and woven again by Armenians, and Jews and Muslims from North Africa. Competition is no obstacle to a sense of community transcending national and religious boundaries, although it may give rise to mistrust and occasional misunderstandings.

Bottom, Spanish immigrants on the Canebière, the famous Marseilles boulevard that leads into the city from the Old Port.

Below, an American sailor joins in a carnival organized by Marseillais of West Indian origin.

Michel Setboun © Rapho, Paris

Richard Kalvar © Magnum, Paris

For the most part immigrants have provided the pool of unskilled labour needed to run the port and the factories. This poorly paid and exploited workforce included men and women from all over the world. At first Italians provided the bulk of the port workers, then Algerians, their ranks swelled until the 1960s by Spanish, Greeks and Armenians, in short all those who were forced to do unpleasant jobs in order to survive. Here, competition led to confrontation, but in the long run awareness of common interests brought these workers closer together and helped them overcome longstanding grievances. The real gaps are social, not national.

In the twentieth century, the middle classes have concentrated in the southern districts, continuing a process that began much earlier.

Michel Setboun © Rapho, Paris

An anti-racist demonstration in a Marseilles street.

The north-south polarity grew more marked in the 1960s and 1970s when working-class housing was built, mainly in the northern neighbourhoods, for a population that was growing in a context of full employment, a situation that has changed since then.

■ *Social integration*

This cleavage naturally exists in daily life, starting at school. The school still does the "integrationist" job described by the long-standing residents of working-class neighbourhoods who look back to the time when children of all backgrounds rubbed shoulders in the classroom, speaking a common, sometimes invented language, a variant of French full of foreign sounds and local jargon. But it is true that social discrimination is growing more marked and that schools are sometimes closed because there are not enough pupils. Working-class housing abandoned by its more affluent residents is demolished.

But there are other places where the different segments of the population come together. They meet at places of recreation, first and foremost at the soccer stadium, where many of them probably identify most strongly with the city. Gathering places less well-known to non-residents of Marseilles are the recently rehabilitated "beaches" along the fringes of the southern neighbourhoods and cultural centres (such as the "Maison de l'Etranger") where different cultures can express themselves. The "Fiesta des docks", held in abandoned warehouses on the waterfront, is another recent success in this field. It attracted thousands of mostly young people from the city's new frontiers.

These new frontiers stretch to the Etang de Berre and Aix-en-Provence. However, the odds are that the city will only truly solve its problems of unemployment, economic efficiency and harmonious coexistence by playing its traditional role as a bridge between Europe and the Mediterranean. The big danger would be for Marseilles to turn inwards to its hinterland and break the bond between the two shores of the Mediterranean. ■

A Marseilles worker gives a colleague a friendly hand.

Richard Kalvar © Magnum, Paris

la paz

a tale of two cities

BY LUZ PACHECO

Nuestra Señora de La Paz (Our Lady of Peace) was founded by the Spaniards on 20 October 1548 in the valley of the torrential river Chuqueyapu. Located in the area where the high plateaux of the Andes (the Altiplano) give way to the slopes leading down to the Amazonian side of the cordillera, it became an important station on the route connecting the Potosi silver mines to Cuzco and the Pacific coast.

At first La Paz consisted of two settlements, one for the "Indians" on the right bank of the Chuqueyapu, near what is today Plaza Alonzo de Mendoza; the other for the Spaniards and their descendants, on the left bank around Plaza Murillo. Although the indigenous-mestizo and Spanish-creole populations lived in close proximity, in practice they were divided by all kinds of physical and symbolic barriers. The torrents and ravines that scar the hill-slopes around the historic town separated the different neighbourhoods, and after an uprising of the Aymara Indians of the Altiplano in 1780 a wall was even built to protect the white population.

Georg Gerster © Rapho, Paris

La Paz from the air.

■ *A social Babel*

La Paz is the only city in Spanish-speaking America that still has two names. In addition to its official name it is known to the Aymara Indians of the Altiplano as Chuquigo or Chukiwayu Marka. In spite of the changes wrought by the centuries, the shifting of the neighbourhoods occupied by the different populations, and ethnic intermixture, La Paz still consists to a large extent of an Indian city and a white city.

This polarity is etched into its majestic site, dominated by Mount Illimani, whose peak towers over 6,400 metres high. The world's highest capital, and the different social strata that live in it, extends in tiers between the altitudes of 4,200 and 3,200 metres. On the heights, slopes and edges of the Altiplano live Aymara Indians who have migrated from the countryside. The middle classes live in the heart of the city, at around 3,600 metres, near the administrative and commercial centre (La Paz became the seat of the Bolivian govern-

ment in 1900). Below 3,500 metres are residential districts where an affluent and largely white population lives in expensive houses surrounded by gardens whose upkeep is favoured by a more temperate climate.

The 1,000 metres between the "top" and "bottom" layers, between the Indian settlements of El Alto and the elegant districts of Calacoto, la Florida and Achumani, contain a welter of climatic, ethnic, economic and social contrasts.

■ *Interdependence*

The whites were long haunted by the fear that they would be encircled by the indigenous people, as they were by Tupaq Katari in 1781. However, the conquest (or reconquest) of the city by the Indians has taken other, more peaceful and irreversible forms. Between the sixteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, whites and mestizos made constant inroads on the territory of the indigenous population. Deprived of their land and no longer able to farm or raise animals, the Indians began to specialize in crafts and trade and came to constitute a partly urbanized group known as *cholos*, "town Indians" or mestizos (see box page 31).

After the revolution of 1952, agrarian reform, universal suffrage, education for all and other measures were introduced, transforming Bolivia's social and economic structures and encouraging a far-reaching process of national integration. An internal market grew, the rural world turned increasingly towards towns and cities like La Paz, Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, and new poles of development emerged in the eastern lowlands.

Attracted by better-paid jobs with higher status to leave their small plots of infertile land, Indian immigrants and Aymara peasants settled in the hills around La Paz and on the plateau, where the gigantic settlement of El Alto grew up. The city's population, 321,000 in 1950, had almost quadrupled by 1992, with nearly one third living in El Alto, where infrastructure and services are often dismally lacking.

Today, the two cities are closely interdependent. The "white" and mestizo city cannot exist without the labour of immigrants who work in the lower echelons of the urban economy (in the clothing, transport and construction industries, in small businesses, and as domestic servants) but have rarely cut themselves off from their home villages.

■ *The birth of the "Indian"*

When the Spaniards arrived in this part of the Andes it was inhabited by a number of Aymara groups such as the Pacajes, the Lupacas and the Collas. These traditional ethnic and territorial units were dismantled by the colonizers and the generic term "Indian" was used to designate all indigenous people. This view of the Indians as a uniform mass still prevails today, even though each region and rural community has a specific identity that can be recognized by its styles of clothing and music, and by the spoken dialect. The term "Indian" is rejected by most of the indigenous peoples, who regard it as an insult and associate it with exploitation and discrimination, but at the ▸

Bruno Perrousse © Vu, Paris

A passer-by is dwarfed by a wall painting in El Alto, the Indian district.

© Charles Lénars, Paris

Dancers shaking rattles celebrate the Christian feast of the Assumption.

▶ same time it is accepted by Indian rights movements which in the last twenty years or so have been trying to end discrimination against all the Indians.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of this debate, it is indisputable that the immigrants brought cultural models that have given La Paz its special flavour. La Paz differs from other Latin American capitals, which are surrounded by poverty belts, in that its needy districts display many features of the rural communities from which their inhabitants have come. For economic and cultural reasons, newcomers first build adobe (sun-dried brick) houses with corrugated iron roofs like those in the villages they have left behind, consisting of a kitchen and a huge common living room for all the family. Later they add new rooms built of industrially manufactured bricks which are often left ungarnished by plaster or whitewash, partly because of the cost but also because new migrants regard these bricks as a status symbol.

External signs and codes—physical appearance, clothing, food and language—are imposed, maintained and even sought-after. They reveal the extreme ethnic diversity of these Indian groups, and also highlight the contrast between them and the economic and political elites who favour a "Western" lifestyle.

La Paz has always been shaped by a two-track process of integration and discrimination. Although the existence of racism is denied it can be seen in the day-to-day relations between people from different social strata. Immigrants of peasant origin do the dirtiest jobs, earn the lowest wages, are excluded from the social security system and have only limited access to schooling and health care.

■ *Festive union*

The different classes of society mingle during the fiestas that punctuate the year. In the predominantly indigenous neighbourhoods, as in the villages, patron saints are the object of colourful celebrations organized and financed by volunteers who want to show their devotion and also acquire prestige corresponding to the money they spend on food and drink for the participants, dancers' costumes, bands, and so on.

In recent decades, several events of Andean and rural origin have spread to other sections

Sean Sprague © Panos Pictures, London

A street scene in the city centre.

© Gérard Sioen/Rapho, Paris

Fruit sellers in an Indian market.

of the population. The *alasitas* fiesta dedicated to Ekeko, an ancient divinity of plenty, is now celebrated throughout the city each year on 24 January. On that day, at midday, everybody in the city stampedes to buy miniature models of houses, cars, banknotes and other good luck charms.

The fiesta of Señor del Gran Poder, which takes place in June, was once celebrated only by the people who live in the parish of that name. In the last twenty-odd years it has been an occasion when dozens of costumed groups dance to rhythms from mestizo, indigenous and *chola* cultures as they parade through the city's main avenues. Recently, people from classes which would once have looked down on such events as vulgar and "Indian" have joined in.

Another common practice is to organize a *ch'alla* good-luck ceremony at house-warming parties, political meetings and all kinds of other occasions. During the ceremony Andean divinities (*Pacha Mama* or *achachilas*, the sacred mountains) are invoked and presented with offerings bought in the "Street of Witches". Sometimes indigenous shamans are called on to use their expertise as negotiators with the Aymara divinities.

Events of this kind show how practices and beliefs that not so long ago were generally inaccessible or despised are spreading and that the different classes and cultures of La Paz are intermingling. It is still too early to say whether these borrowings merely indicate that the "haves" are taking over the cultural forms of a tamed and neutralized class of "have-nots", or whether they mark the start of a process that will eventually lead to genuine recognition of these cultures. ■

HALF-WAY HOUSE

In La Paz the term *cholo* describes people who are socially and ethnically in a halfway house. For those who regard themselves as "whites", a *cholo* is the son of an Indian who no longer dresses in a traditional way like his father and has received a more highly rated education. For others, a *cholo* is the mestizo son of a marriage between a white and an Indian, or else the son of a *cholo*. To be considered as such, two conditions must be met. A *cholo* must have migrated to the city and have a job whose status is sufficiently high for him no longer to be defined as an "Indian". For example, a mason or a plumber who has migrated from the countryside will be treated as an Indian, but an incomer who has a job with higher status (e.g. as a driver or butcher), will be regarded as a *cholo*.

In white people's minds, the intermediate status occupied by the *cholos* in La Paz society seems bound up with a set of qualities and defects (rebelliousness, submission, neurosis). A passport from *cholo* status to that of a "señor" is possession of a certain amount of wealth and an education—preferably gained abroad. For many "whites", however, those who have "made it" in this way, i.e. become "señores", remain half-*cholos*. "He acts like a *cholo*," is an insulting way of saying that a person has no manners and reprehensible habits.

In La Paz, there are no very marked differences in men's dress, which is mainly determined by economic factors, but women's dress s quite a different matter. In everyday language, a distinction is made between "a dressed-up woman ", who wears Western-style clothes, and a *chola* who wears the *pollera* (a capacious dress with a pleat in the middle).

***Cholas* who control the sale of food in the markets are a feared and respected group. They react with firmness and pride when the term *chola* is applied to them pejoratively by those who do not belong to their social and cultural world. ■ L. P.**

Sean Sprague © Panos Pictures, London

M. Bertinetti © Rapho, Paris

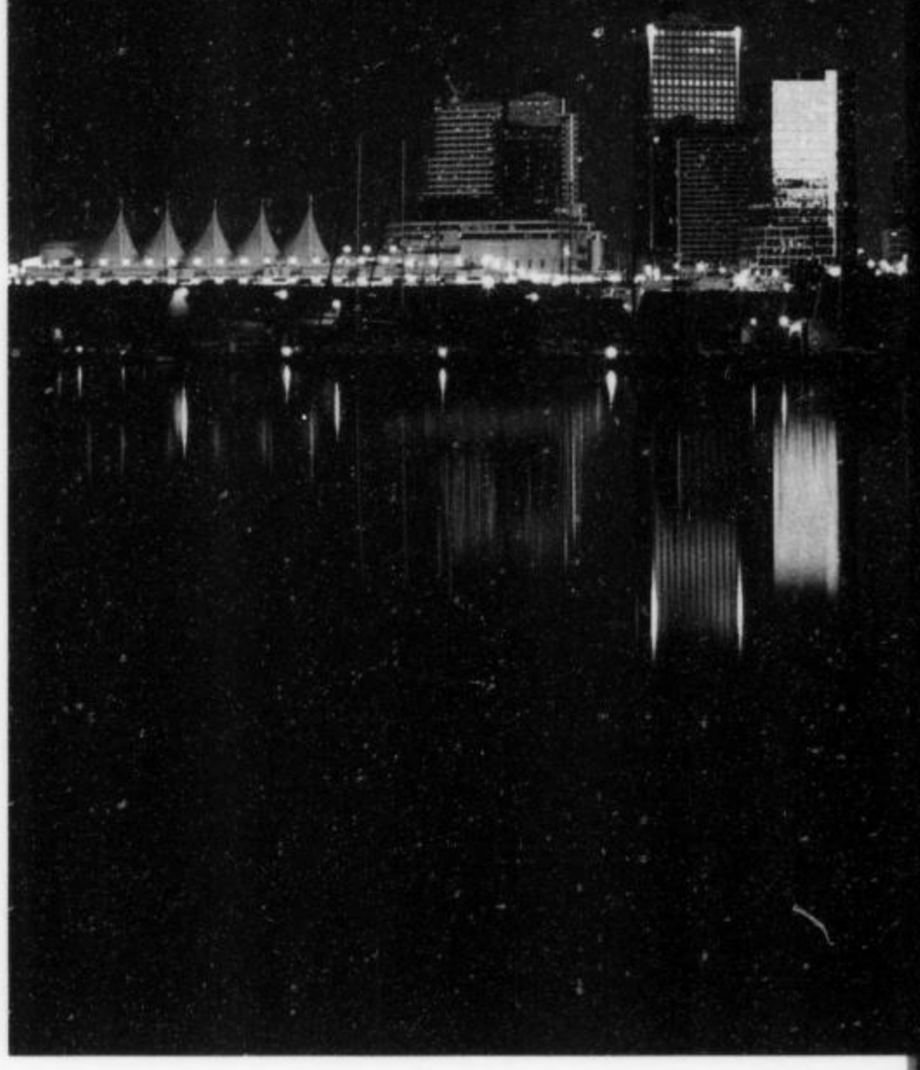
Left, a house in the Calacoto residential district.

Far left, a shanty town on the heights of La Paz.

VANCOUVER

or the spirit of place

BY HADANI DITMARS



Vancouver, pretty little Pacific town of my youth. Cedar trees and blue water. Snow-capped mountains and Indian legends. I returned to you after years away and found a city transformed.

Whole neighbourhoods had changed languages—from English to Chinese, Punjabi and Spanish. Street signs spoke Cantonese and all the taxi drivers were refugees. Vancouver had made that grand voyage from small town to big city, and even more dramatically, it had leapt into the realm of displacement. It had become a town full of people who were from somewhere else.

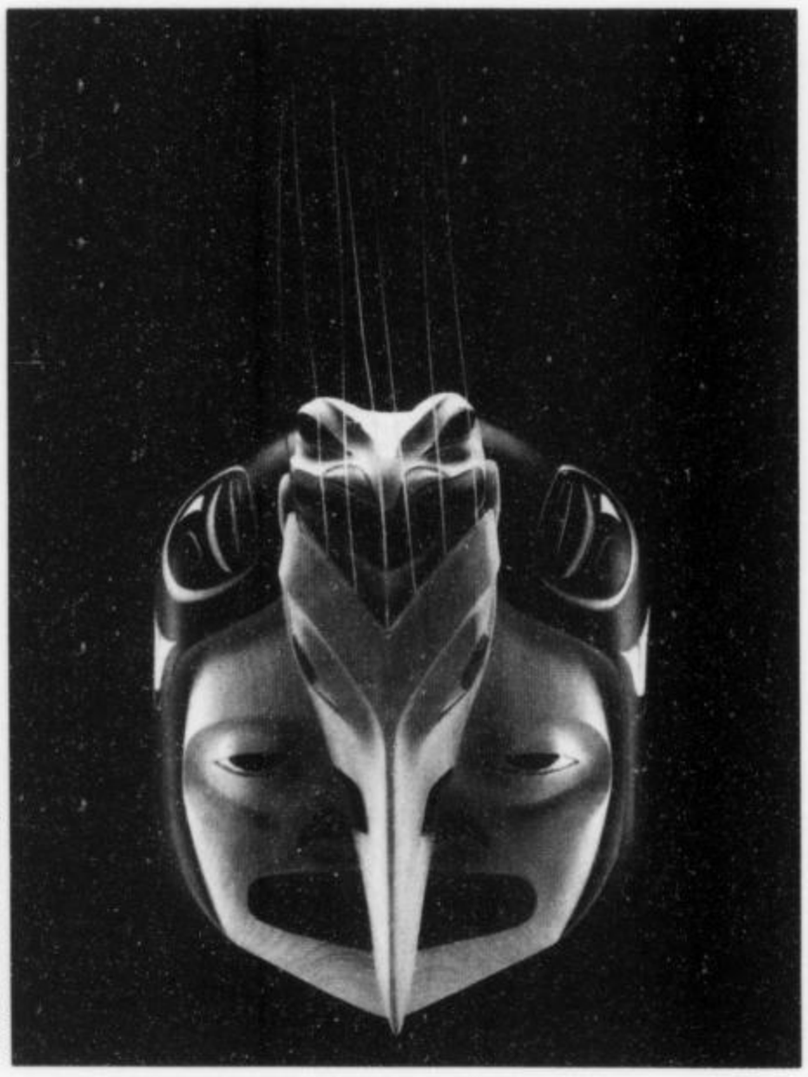
Canada is known for its multiculturalism, but Vancouver, which is separated from the rest of the country by the Rocky Mountains and spiritually connected to Asia by the Pacific Ocean, is unique even within the Canadian experience.

Only one hundred years old, Vancouver was built on the bones of ancient native cultures by mainly British Europeans and indentured Chinese and Japanese labour.

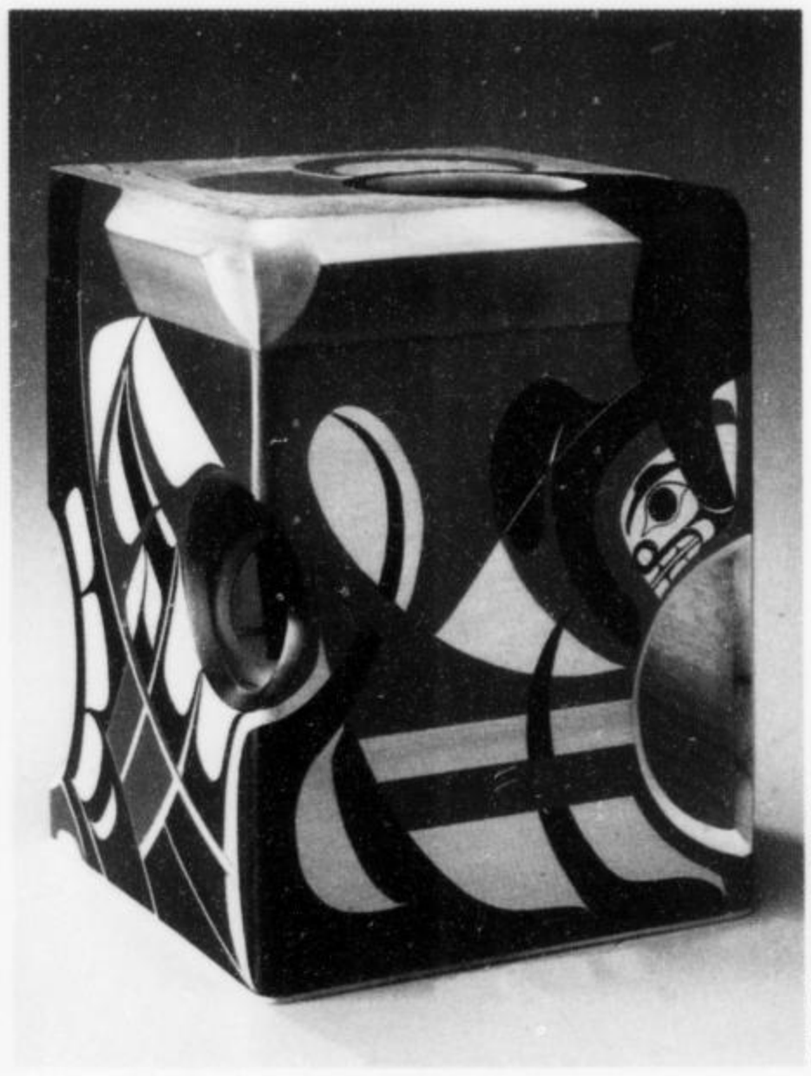
Native Indian children were routinely taken from their parents and put into "residential schools" where their culture, language and traditions were replaced by white English, Christian values.

Since the introduction of Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau's policy of mul-

A mask by Bob Dempsey inspired by Native American tradition. It depicts a human face with a raven and a frog.

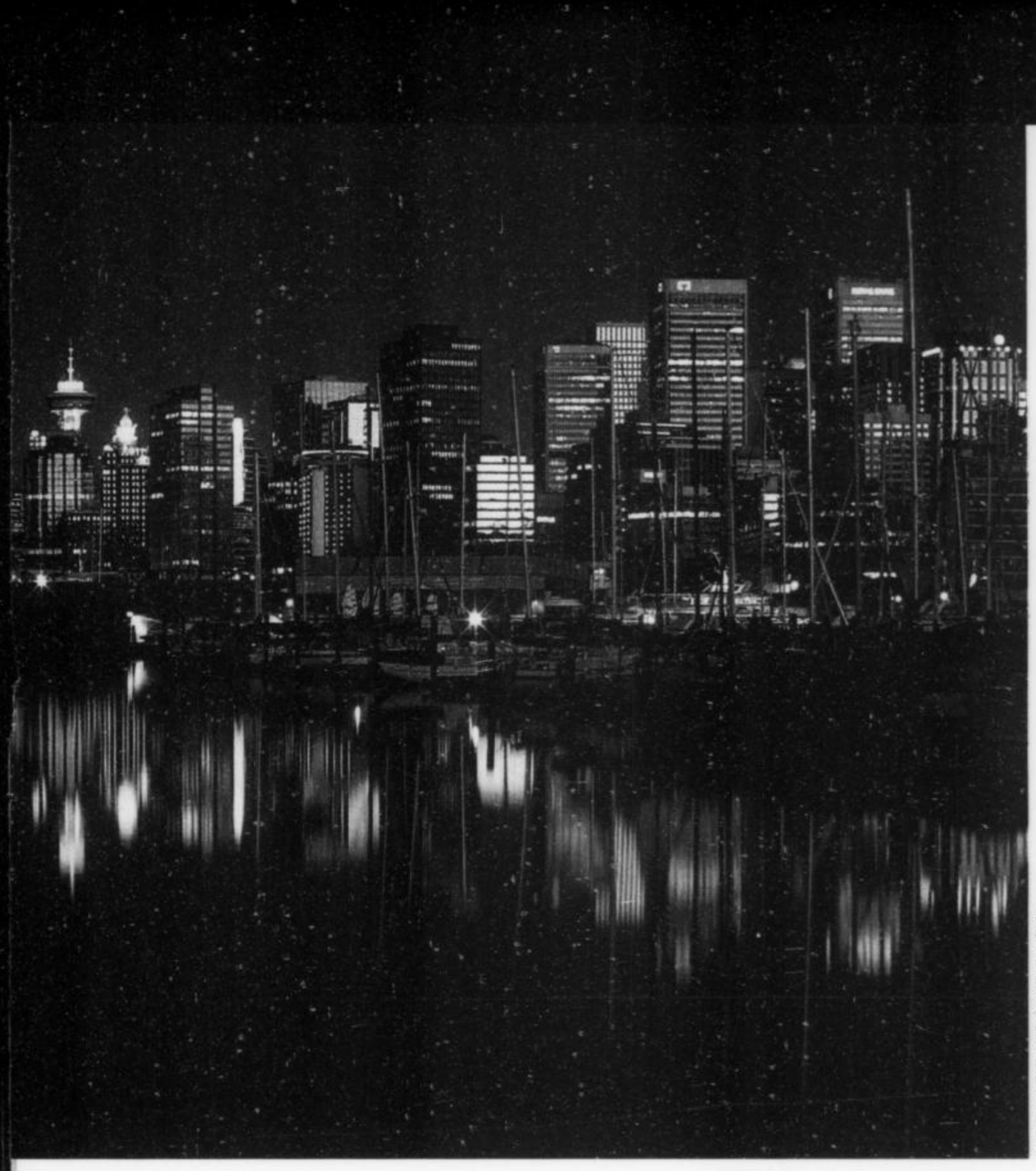


T. Mills © Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver



A bentwood box with a mask inside by Ken Mowatt, a contemporary Canadian artist.

T. Mills © Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver



Alain Evrard © Globe Press/Hoaqui, Paris

The inner port of Vancouver, Canada's third largest city.

ticulturalism, Canadians have been encouraged to forget the past and embrace each others' differences. But the road to harmonious cultural pluralism has not been easy. Japanese Canadian groups have sought and in many places gained acknowledgement for their unjust internment during the Second World War as enemy aliens, but compensation for the full extent of their emotional and financial suffering has not been forthcoming.

Native groups have been engaged in a series of on-going and controversial land claims, and English-Canadians have had to adjust to the cultural changes brought by the influx of Hong Kong immigrants.

But Vancouver's unique position in the Canadian cultural context, its dramatic geography and indeed its very newness, create a special atmosphere, where cultural *métissage* is not only possible but inevitable. For in a city less than a century old, tradition is something that must be created rather than referred to.

■ *The beauty of emptiness*

As a student, I always complained that Vancouver lacked culture and dreamed of escape to Paris or Rome—older cities with richer traditions. Now, coming back to the city of my birth after years in many "older" places, I realize that the very newness of Vancouver is its richness. Its emptiness is its beauty. Without the cultural baggage—both good and bad—of more established cities, Vancouver becomes a place where anything is possible, a place where the new cultures arriving here can easily take root.

Vancouver is not a "melting pot" like the American multicultural model, where integration usually means assimilation. It is a place where cultures can continue to flourish and grow, often keeping their language and traditions, transplanting them into new soil. The end result is a kind of cross pollination where cultures rub against each other in new and creative ways.

Evidence of this is found in Vancouver's many ethnically distinct neighbourhoods, districts that have their own colour and flavour, but manage to transcend "ghettoization" through cross-cultural connection.

There is Vancouver's "Chinatown", for instance—one of the largest in North America—where the street signs are bilingual (Chinese/English). Although most residents are oriental, there is a growing link with the non-Asian community, just as Chinese speaking Vancouverites are making inroads into traditionally ▸

Alain Evrard © Globe Press/Hoaqui, Paris

A totem pole in Stanley Park.

- Anglo-Canadian enclaves (especially in the business sector). A small but significant Anglo-Canadian community of artists, inspired by the sounds and colours of the lively marketplace, chooses to live and work there. In addition, in a city whose culinary palate is becoming more and more Asian (most Vancouverites feel comfortable using chopsticks, and have *dim sum* and *sushi* in their nutritional vernacular), an increasing number of non-Chinese Vancouverites go to Chinatown to shop for food.

And as alternative medicine currently enjoys great popularity in Vancouver, many non-Asians go to Chinatown to consult Chinese herbal doctors or acupuncturists. Some non-Chinese Vancouverites are even adopting Chinese geomancy—or *feng shui*—the ancient Taoist art of designing houses and interiors so that energy and harmony emanate and "bad spirits" are not "trapped" in "blocked" or poorly designed spaces, and come to Chinatown to consult with *feng shui* masters.

Others come to Chinatown to sit and contemplate in the Sun-Yat-Sen classical Chinese gardens, where blue herons perch near bamboo plants and pools of goldfish. (The only other public garden in Vancouver that matches this one in serenity is perhaps the Nitobe memorial Japanese Garden, which stays true to the Shinto spirit thousands of miles from Kyoto, while springing effortlessly out of West Coast forest that is eerily Japanese).

■ *The gateway to Asia*

While Vancouver is becoming known as the "gateway to Asia" and 25 per cent of our population are Chinese speaking, this is only part of the cross-cultural picture.

The Commercial Drive area, on the East side of the city, is another example of an integrated ethnic neighbourhood. Originally a very Italian area, Commercial Drive has now become the great boulevard of multicultural café society. Bohemian Anglo-Canadians, new Portuguese and South American immigrants as well as the original Italian community, all sit together at the numerous *terrazzo* cafes, sipping *caffe latte*. Commercial Drive has become the place for displaced Mediterraneans of all nationalities, as local clubs feature nights of Spanish flamenco music and Portuguese *fado* attended enthusiastically by both southern Europeans and WASPs with gypsy hearts.

A stroll through the area around 49th and Main Street, popularly known as Indiatown, is a fantastic voyage in itself. It's like finding a Delhi market magically transported to the West Coast. I remember shopping there one day in the midst of a small blizzard, with two feet of snow piled up on the sidewalks. The full fury of a Canadian winter could not stop the sari merchants from selling silk, or keep the sweetshop owner from his brisk trade in coconut delectables. The streets were full of women in colourful scarves and pantaloons wearing snowboots, and young, turbanned men dressed in the latest urban chic—leather jackets and mobile phones—off to the CD shop to buy the latest *bhangra* (Indian pop music) tunes. After a few blocks, the faces became paler, the music duller, the aromas less intense, and I looked back at Indiatown like a small urban jewel, glittering in the distance.

Similarly transporting is a walk down West Broadway in the "Greek area". Within a five-block radius, there are scores of Greek restaurants, cafes and night-clubs. A special basement taverna known simply as "The Greek Club" offers after hours bouzouki music, great *ouzo* and wild folk dancing, as well as heart-felt ballads of lost love belted out by a beautiful, dark-eyed singer. It's enough to make you homesick for Athens, until, bleary-eyed from the late night and the Greek ciga-

Musicians of different ethnic origins form the Vancouver-based "Asza" group.

© Asza, Vancouver

Bertrand Gardel © Hémisphères, Paris

C. Rivet © Apparence, Paris

Alain Evrard © Globe Press/Hoaqui, Paris

Alain Evrard © Globe Press/Hoaqui, Paris

Top, an Italian restaurant on Water Street.

Above, left to right: Fruit and vegetable stalls in Vancouver's Chinatown. A street near the waterfront. Street scene in the city centre.

to raise funds for refugee relief—a simple, compassionate gesture that might not have been possible in another cultural and geographical context.

Spiritually, too, Vancouver offers a wealth of cross-cultural experience. It is a city where you can find Christians who go on native "visionquests", Jews who have become whirling dervishes, and Scandinavian Lutherans who have transformed into Tibetan Buddhists.

I know of an Iranian Sufi teacher who leads weekly discussions of Persian esoteric poetry from his East Vancouver apartment. He reads and analyses excerpts from Saadi, Hafez and Rumi for a group of faithful students from all corners of the globe. Among them are Jews, Muslims and Christians, Asians and Anglo-Canadians—all Vancouverites. The sense of displacement somehow complements the Sufi message that we are all spiritual exiles in the material world, as well as the idea that unity is achieved through transcending opposites.

I also know a Cree healer who runs weekly native "healing circles" where people from all kinds of backgrounds participate. When I first attended one such "circle", where participants sing, chant and drum native prayers while passing an eagle feather around, I found a truly international group. Among them were a Polish secretary, an African teacher, a Swiss naturalist and a French artist. The Cree Shaman told us that we were all connected by a common experience of the spirit of the land.

It was a spiritual homecoming for me to realize that, although my ancestors came from many different lands—from Lebanon, from Denmark, France, England and Ireland—they and I were bonded by, as D. H. Lawrence put it, the spirit of place.

Vancouver's green forests, blue waters and majestic mountains are a common heritage for us all to share. As the American Indians say, no one "owns" the land because it "belongs" to everyone. As long as everyone in turn belongs a little to the land. ■

rette smoke, you emerge from below only to find some unmistakable sign of North America—a McDonalds restaurant or a Seven-Eleven chain-store.

And while Vancouver's colonial history is not unblemished, different cultures do co-exist here in relative peace and harmony. Indeed, more and more immigrants are attracted to Vancouver precisely because it is, relatively speaking, a sanctuary.

Not long ago, a group of gypsies arrived here from central Europe, fleeing the recent increase in violence and persecution from skinheads and neo-nazis. They were helped by a group of local gypsies and other supporters to find housing and winter clothes. Some of the gypsies who were musicians were able to find work at a café where a multicultural group (an Indian guitarist, a *Rom* gypsy dancer from England, and a French Basque singer) perform flamenco music every week. To them, Vancouver is paradise. It is a place where they can have a chance to live normal, healthy lives, relatively free from racism.

During the violent shelling in South Lebanon in the spring of 1996, a local group of humanitarian Jews and Arabs joined forces

Louis Goldman © Rapho, Paris

THE SPIRIT OF DIVERSITY

BY ANISSA BARRAK

"Crossroads cities" took shape down the ages as a result of population movements and voluntary or enforced migrations that brought together a wide spectrum of cultures and ethnic groups. Located in the heart of economically strategic regions, these composite cities have drawn sustenance from multifarious contributions made by those who have settled in them. Their societies possess a creative dynamism which is the mainspring of their constantly renewed diversity.

But successful handling of the difficulties inherent in these plural societies—with their multitude of ethnic groups, languages and religions—means facing up to the problems of adversity, exclusion, ghettoization and rejection. Crossroads cities harbour striking contrasts and fierce conflicts sometimes erupt within them.

Religious, national and ethnic minorities, of varying numbers and degrees of influence, provide the pluralistic flavour of crossroads cities. The place they occupy in the city is often reflected in its spatial organization. To live in one of the ghetto areas into which minorities are shunted is generally a sign of discrimination, of legal inequality or social and economic marginalization. When minorities are more evenly spread throughout a city it is often the sign of a more tolerant and egalitarian regime.

Cities and towns that have managed to develop and prosper in a spirit of cultural and human diversity have done so by officially protecting minorities. This kind of protection is the guarantee of peaceful cohabitation, even if cohabitation is not always synonymous with fair and equal treatment, still less with cordial relations between the different communities. In one city ethnic and cultural intermixture succeeds because it is an accepted practice; in another, communities are separated; elsewhere, fidelity to specific traditions goes hand in hand with allegiance to a nation.

Some regard ethnic and cultural intermingling as a source of cultural impoverishment through a fusion that leads to uniformity and levelling down; others see it is a source of mutual enrichment, the fruit of mutual exchange. But this dilemma reveals the paradox that is at the heart of all crossroads cities: is the pursuit of cultural intermixture as an ideal in plural cities anathema to their very pluralism? ■

Top, a street festival on Ninth Avenue in Manhattan (New York). The stalls offer ethnic gastronomic specialities.

FACT FILE

RAMPANT URBANIZATION

The world's population is becoming more and more urban. In 1950 only 30% of humanity lived in towns and cities, and 45% in 1995. By the year 2000, every second human being is expected to live in an urban area. Most of this growth will take place in small and medium-sized towns and cities. The world's mega-cities of more than 10 million inhabitants currently hold only 4% of the world's people. ■

Source: United Nations, 1996

UNESCO AND CITIES

UNESCO has established an action-oriented project entitled "Cities: management of social and environmental transformations" for the six-year period 1996-2001. The first four years will be spent designing and implementing a small number of pilot activities. During the final two years (2000-2001), a comparative evaluation of these experiments will be carried out, and proposals will be designed to improve policies for cities, mainly in respect of support for local communities.

This project, which will be carried out as part of UNESCO's MOST (Management of Social Transformations) and MAB (Man and the Biosphere) Programmes, will be implemented in partnership with local authorities, non-governmental organizations and local voluntary associations. Co-operation with international organizations and scientific communities is actively sought. ■

MOST AND THE SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CITIES

Successful city management policies must be conducive to "social sustainability"—this is the central premise of a MOST project entitled "towards socially sustainable cities: building a knowledge base for urban management".

By policy-relevant research, the MOST programme seeks to foster an environment conducive to the participation of culturally and socially diverse groups while at the same time promoting social integration through improvements in the quality of life of all segments of the population.

Its international research projects cover a broad spectrum, including industrialization and decentralization in medium-sized towns in India, the socio-economic problems of mega-cities, and cities, environment and social relations between men and women. ■

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METROPOLIS

"Metropolis" is an international research project that seeks to stimulate multidisciplinary research on the effects of international migration on urban centres.

The project has two overriding objectives:

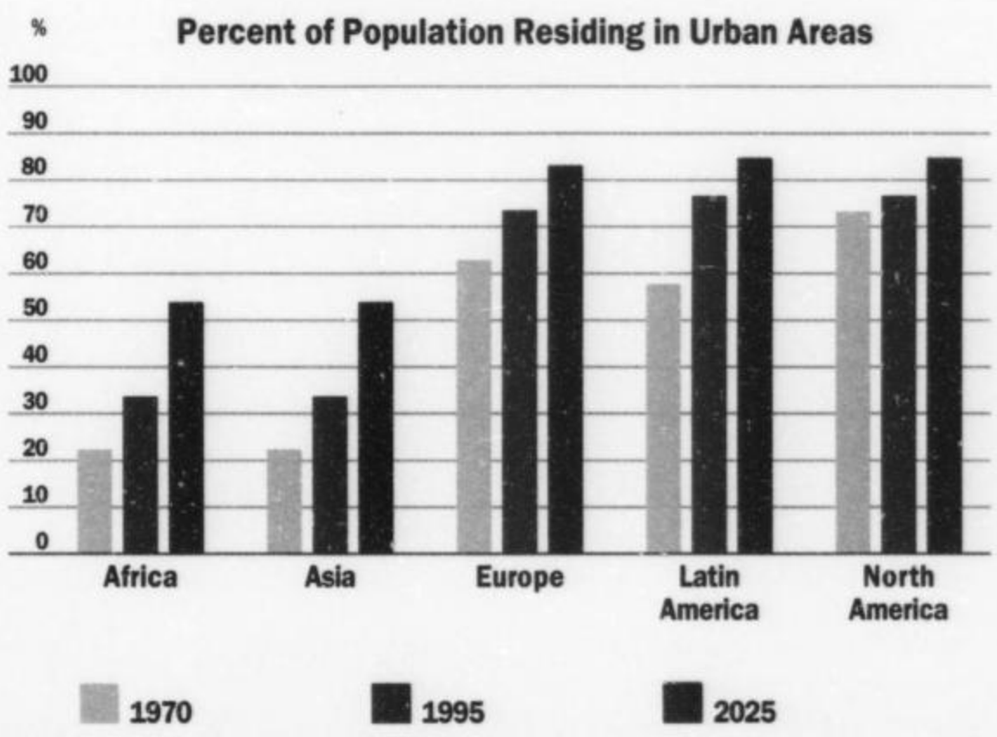
- to provide policy makers at all levels of government, as well as community and business leaders, with solid information on which to anchor their policies;
- to develop an inventory of "best international practices", i.e. the most effective approaches adopted in all countries that have significant numbers of foreign-born persons in their large urban centres.

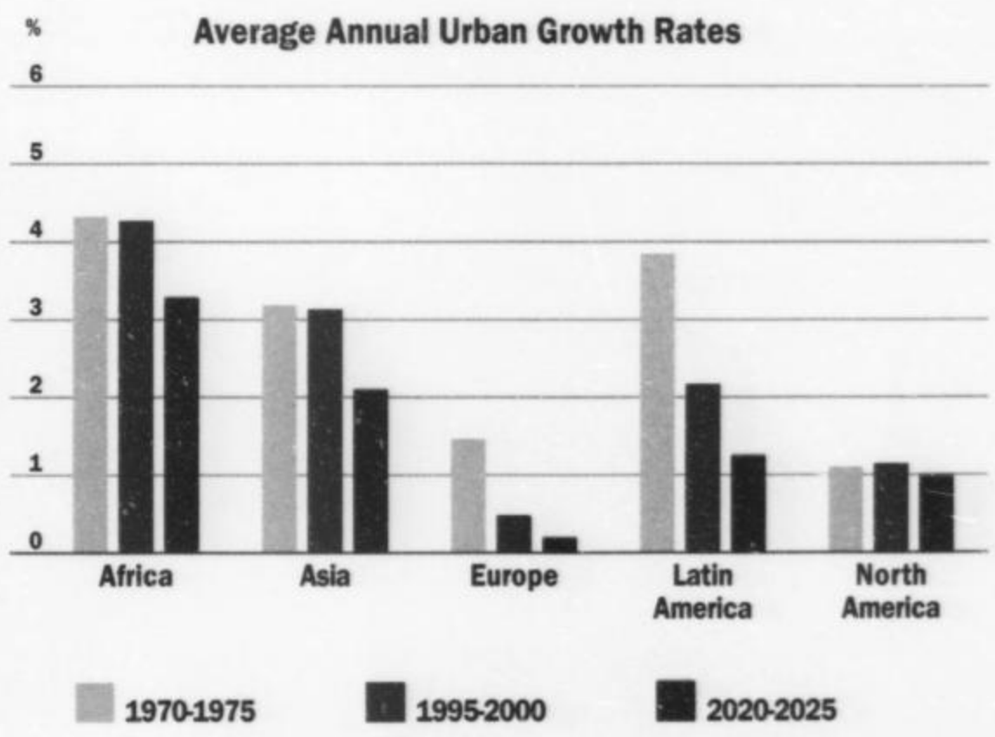
Metropolis is a loose partnership involving governments, research institutes and international agencies. Its members include Canada, the United States, Argentina, New Zealand, Israel, Italy, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, Austria, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UNESCO and the European Union.

The project features a series of major annual international conferences hosted by "partner countries". The first was organized in 1996 by Italy. The next will be held in Copenhagen (Denmark) from 25 to 28 September 1997. ■

For further information, contact:
Department of Citizenship and Immigration
Canada-Metropolis Project.
Tel: (1) (613) 957 59 70;
Fax: (1) (613) 957 59 68.

REGIONAL TRENDS IN URBANIZATION 1970-2025





Source: United Nations Population Division, 1995

COMMENTARY

Science and society (1)

Federico Mayor

UNESCO/Gil Jacques, Montréal

Scientists, politicians and scientific research

The Second World War marked a turning point in the relations between science and government. It was then, for example, that the first science adviser to the White House was recruited. This kind of assignment was something quite new to those who had hitherto earned their living mainly by research or the teaching of science.

While scientific research and government were becoming indispensable to each other, traditional policy-making procedures were becoming obsolete.

A dangerous shift

Science has come to impinge more and more on society, to some extent vindicating faith in the scientific enterprise, but giving rise to doubts about human capacity for the wise management of its applications. Increasingly science has had to respond to many different and not always convergent interests in society and enter into a relationship with many different groups, including industry, government departments, the academic community and tax-payers. The traditional boundary between scientific practice and science policy has become blurred. The issues, though still scientific in nature, are also economic, political, social and cultural. It is increasingly apparent that the traditional model of science-and-technology decision-making, in which experts in their various fields offer advice in confidence to decision-

makers whose interests and reflexes are often more political than scientific, will no longer serve.

Where a ministry or an equivalent body lays down policy guidelines for scientific research, it is often not sufficiently separate from day-to-day politics to maintain the long-term perspective required in this sphere. Furthermore, responsibility for science and technology policy is often sectorally divided, which is not conducive to the development of an integrated policy or the promotion of research in frontier areas cutting across traditional fields. There is also an unfortunate tendency for the interests of science to be sacrificed to expediency—for example, to short-term economic considerations or the government's need to achieve immediate results in order to stay in power.

Decisions and disagreements

Matters are not helped by the fact that science invariably speaks with many voices. Despite their commitment to objectivity, technical advisers rarely agree once they stray outside the realm of hard science. "When issues related to science and technology having strong political content . . . come to the fore," Frederick Seitz, a past president of the American National Academy of Sciences, has said, "it is always relatively easy to find individuals with good professional qualifications to argue, even vehemently, in support of either side." This accords undue power to decision-makers who then make choices based on their interests and/or biases, using so-called scientific evidence in support of what is in effect a foregone conclusion.

The lack of agreement among scientists reflects the complexity of the issues, which invariably involve a complex combination of fields and require a holistic approach for their solution. Scientists by themselves cannot be expected to provide a complete answer to such questions. It is important that the spectrum of expert advice should be extended to ensure inputs from all relevant fields.

A fresh approach

What is required is to move away from what has been termed "decisionist action"—whereby government decrees policy based almost exclusively on expertise provided by the scientific and technological community—to an approach whereby the government takes into consideration the views of the different protagonists with their diverse values and standpoints. An effort should also be made to raise the general level of scientific and technological culture to optimize societal participation and support.

But this would require some fundamental changes of attitude on the part of scientists and politicians alike. Scientists would have to develop a greater sensitivity to the social and political impact of the advice they proffer. Politicians, for their part, would have to cede some of their decision-making power to the experts, while learning to accept the inevitable quota of uncertainty and instability in the advice received.

The role of expert advice must, therefore, be redefined in such a way as to emphasize the importance of scientifically based decision-making while excluding any idealized vision of enlightenment through scientific rationality. The goal should be to arrive, through the marshalling and confrontation of advice in all relevant fields, at the choices best adapted to each situation. The diagnosis on which policy is based should be as complete as possible, but it must also be made in time. If we wait too long, "the patient may die", or irreversible damage may be caused. Irreversibility is a key criterion. Postponement could lead to a point of no return.

Thought also needs to be given to the increasing unwieldiness of scientific and technological institutions with their multitude of decision-making centres. They should be trimmed down to manageable proportions so that responsibilities can be more readily pinpointed and the risks of duplication lessened. That being said, the hubris of overplanning must be avoided. Scientific creativity cannot be regulated. Policy decisions in certain areas of fundamental research must remain with the scientists concerned—such autonomy being the very condition of those qualitative advances in understanding that are ultimately as crucial to the applied as they are to the basic sciences. In the words of Bernardo Houssay, "there are no applied sciences if there is no science to apply". ■

HERITAGE

a Bible in stone

NOTRE-DAME D'AMIENS

by Cécile Romane

The cathedral of Amiens in France is a masterpiece of Gothic architecture celebrated for the stone carvings on its Western portals. It was placed on the World Heritage List in 1981.

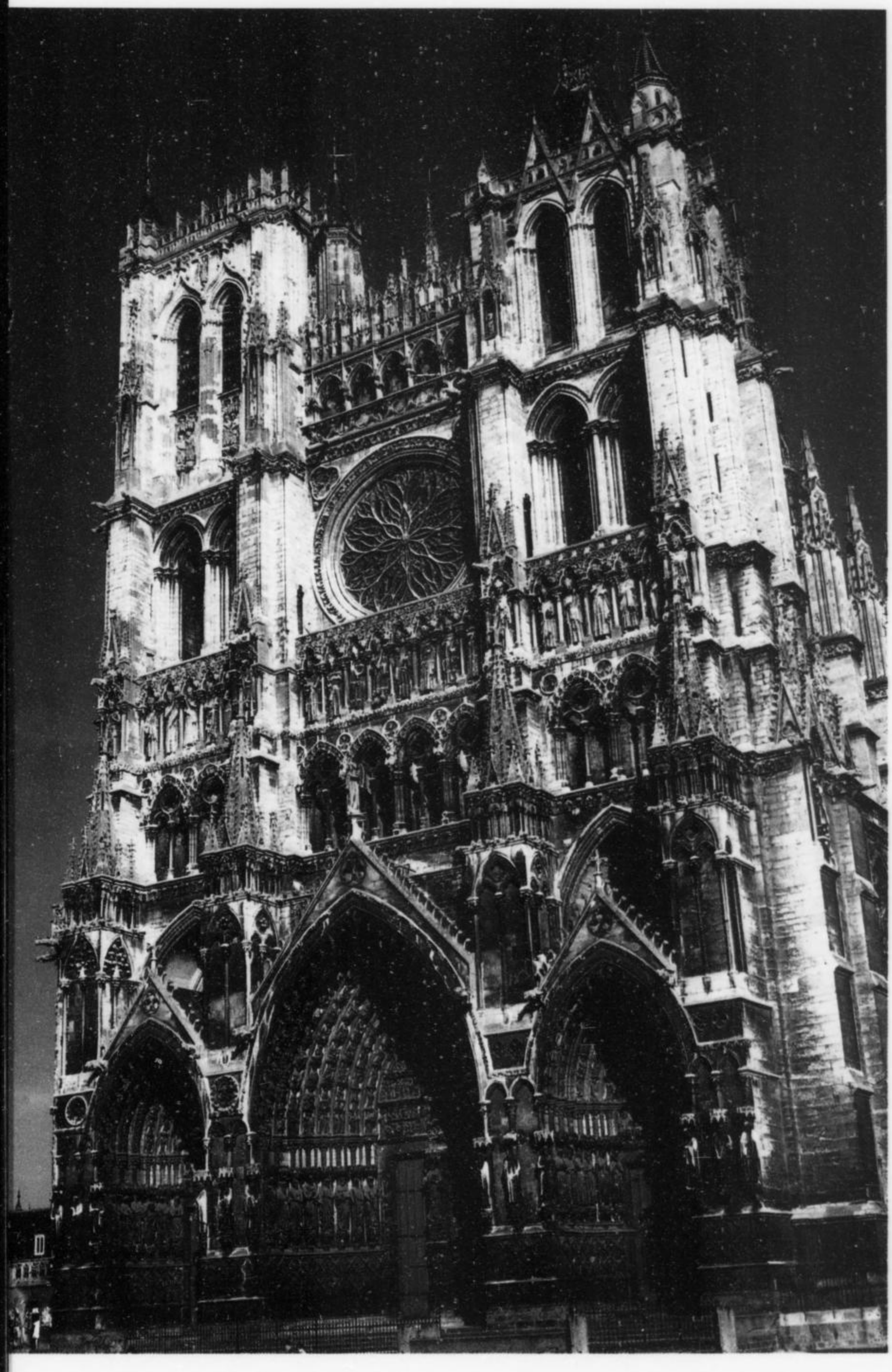
P. Wysocki/S. Frances © Hémisphères, Paris

In foreground, a sculpture by an anonymous 16th-century artist depicts Salome holding the head of John the Baptist.

Notre-Dame d'Amiens, the largest cathedral in France and a masterpiece of the Rayonnant style of Gothic architecture, is twice the size of Notre-Dame in Paris. Yet it does not give any impression of being overpowering or disproportionately huge. On the contrary, harmony, elegance and rhythm are the words brought to mind by the thrust of the pillars, the daring of the high windows and the proportions of the rib vaults. Inside, the visitor is struck by the airiness, and looking upwards is charmed by the alternating vivid pinks and greens which cover the expanses of the vaults. Even though other French cathedrals elicit widespread admiration (Chartres or Rheims, for example), many people regard Notre-Dame d'Amiens as the Gothic cathedral par excellence.

A PASSION FOR BUILDING

The first Gothic church of Amiens, consecrated in 1152, burned down in 1218. Another church had to be built. Like most of their contemporaries, the people of Amiens wanted to improve on what had already been done and they had the resources to do so. Thanks to its weavers, its spinners and its dyers, who used plants to produce the highly popular Amiens "blue", the city was prosperous. The chap-



© Amiens Cathedral Treasury

The Face of Saint John the Baptist, a relic from the cathedral treasury.

tects, Thomas de Cormont and his son Renaud, succeeded Robert de Luzarches. The success of the cathedral was due as much to Robert's plans and methods as to the innovations introduced by his two successors. Amiens was the first cathedral to be built to small-scale plans and also the first where the stone-cutting work was rationalized. Shelters were built in the quarry so that work could continue during bad weather, and the prefabricated elements the masons produced were then stored, ready for use when the weather improved.

Work on a church usually starts with the choir, the centre of worship. However, since the area where the choir was to be located was occupied, work at Amiens started with the nave and the high windows were placed on a blind triforium, the normal practice at that time. However, after the death of Robert de Luzarches in about 1223, when the choir and the apse were being added, the ▸

© Charles Lénars, Paris

Detail of the carved wooden choir stalls (early 16th century).

ter was also growing rich from the influx of pilgrims. Bishop Evrard de Fouilloy lost no time in asking the architect Robert de Luzarches to build a cathedral in the Gothic style, which had begun to be used in the previous century and was then flourishing—construction work was already underway on the cathedrals of Chartres, Bourges and Paris.

The passion for building in the Middle Ages—which some people at the time described as *morbus aedificandi* (the building sickness)—covered France with monuments of which half, some 1,300 buildings, still exist today. Amiens cathedral (1220-1280) was built during this productive period when an aspiration towards splendour and novelty fostered technical prowess.

In due course, two other archi-

The west façade of Amiens Cathedral (13th century). The two towers were completed in the 14th and 15th centuries. The cathedral was extensively restored in the 19th century by the French architect Viollet-le-Duc.

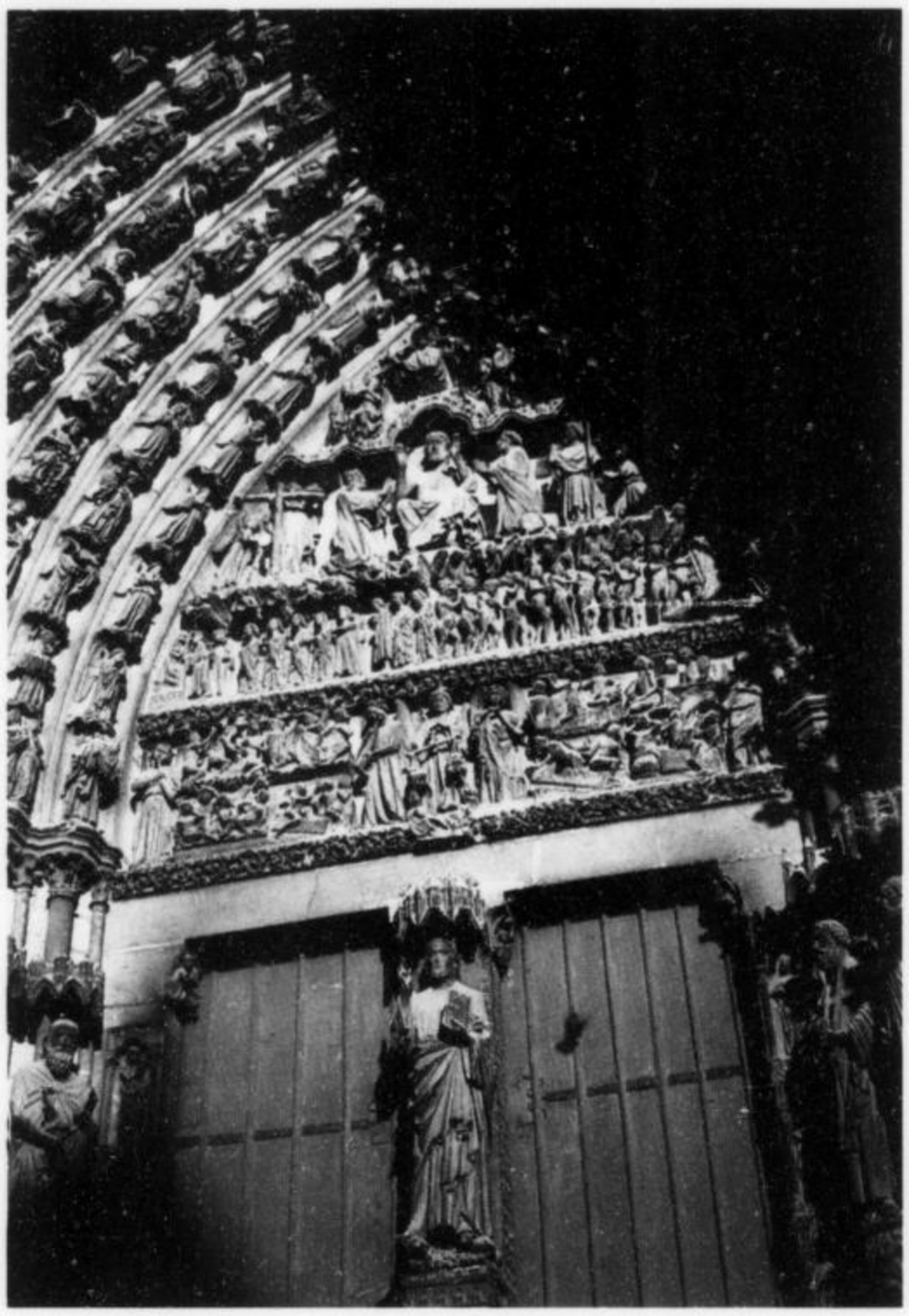
▶ techniques for building an openwork triforium were known. This is why, at Amiens, light flows in abundantly at the back, conferring on the cathedral a grace which is felt by everyone who visits it, Christian and non-Christian alike.

From the twelfth century onwards, the Gothic conception of architecture attached more importance to emptiness than fullness, and soared skywards in search of beauty. This concern for clarity and for unity of space dictated certain features which contribute to the originality of Amiens.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

On the West façade, the vast Beau Dieu porch is flanked by the smaller porches of the Mother of God and St. Firmin. The profusion of sculptures recounting sacred history has earned the cathedral the description of "a Bible in stone" The fifty-five main statues are placed in a hierarchical order with, in the centre, the twelve Apostles surrounding Christ giving his blessing, while the tympanum shows details of the Last Judgement. The right porch displays the history of the Virgin Mary, and the left the lives of St. Firmin, who came from Pamplona in the third century to preach in Amiens, and of other local saints.

In the past, the porches were used as shelters as well as entrances and justice was dispensed there. Beneath each statue, at head height, are two lines of quatrefoils, a typical French Gothic motif. The vices and virtues are represented at the feet of the Apostles. They are read vertically—with courage standing higher than fear—and symmetrically. Each virtue refers to its symmetrical counterpart on the other side of the porch—so that love faces chastity. Charity is represented by the gift of a cloak to a naked beggar. This allegory reminds us that it was at Amiens that St. Martin divided his cloak in two with a stroke of his sword and gave half of it to a poor man.



© Charles Lénars, Paris

One of the great west portals, decorated with 13th-century sculptures including the "Beau Dieu" and the Last Judgement (detail).

St. Firmin's portal shows the work of the different seasons of the year and the signs of the Zodiac.

Very high up, above the Gallery of the Kings, which is found in all Gothic cathedrals in France, shines a rose window whose fine stone and glass tracery extends over a circle with a diameter of almost 13 metres. This colossal circle is as big as a circus ring with room for twelve galloping horses. On either side rise two towers of different heights, one completed at the end of the fourteenth century, the other in the fifteenth. When it was built, the interior of Amiens cathedral was the highest in the world, the central vault rising to more than 42 metres, the equivalent of fifteen storeys.

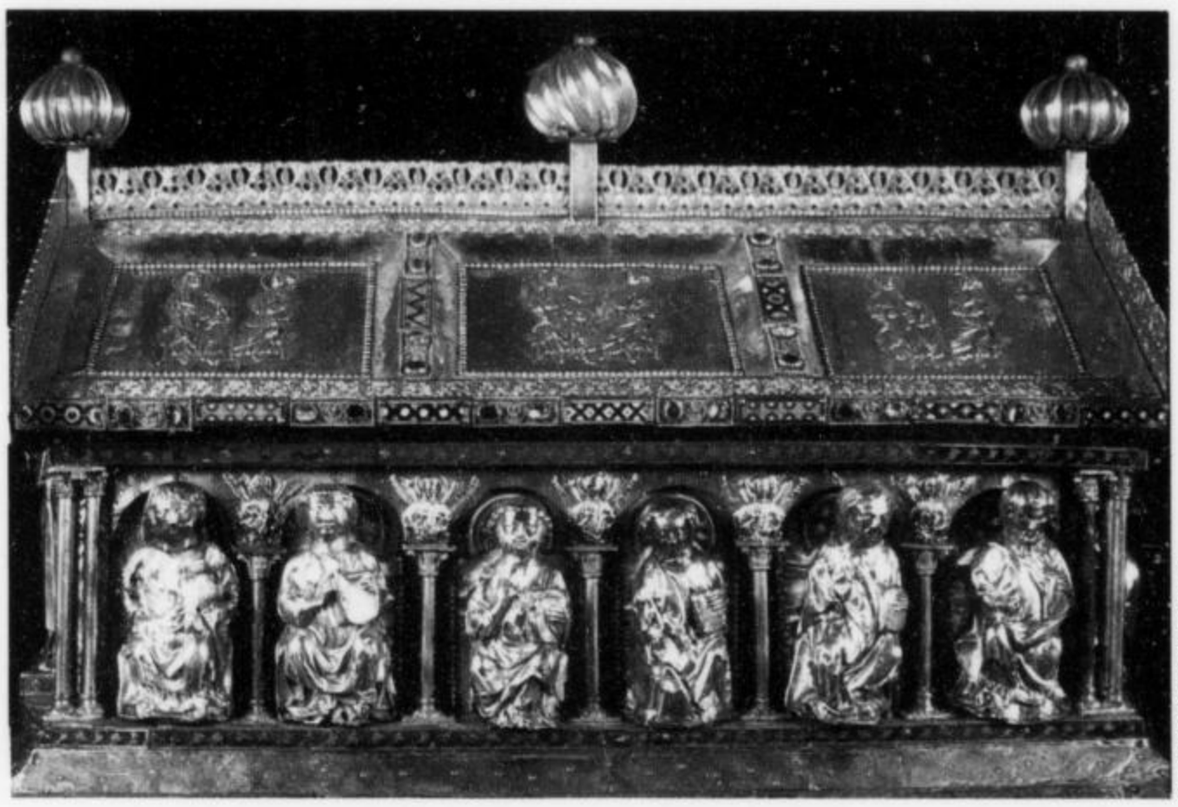
But the cathedral's architecture is not its only interesting feature. The 110 oak choir stalls, carved with breathtaking virtuosity, constitute the finest masterpiece in wood to be found in France. They were executed over a period of fourteen years (1508-1522) by three local artists. On the seats, the arm rests and the pendentives, thousands of small figures, all different and dressed in the style of the early sixteenth century, mime biblical and secular scenes.

Round the choir and the transept, four series of polychrome stone high-reliefs show dozens of figures, as lifelike as portraits, acting out the Bible stories and the life of St. Firmin in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century costume.

In addition to a polychrome wooden Madonna and Child dating from the fifteenth century, the cathedral Treasury contains the silver casket of St. Firmin, a marvel of thirteenth-century art from the Meuse region, and the Face of St. John the Baptist, brought back from Constantinople around 1206. This impressive relic, protected by a large hollowed-out rock crystal, is presented on a gold plate with an enamelled cover adorned with a striking face of St. John.

NON-STOP RESTORATION

Restoration work is always going on in Notre-Dame d'Amiens. In 1880, John Ruskin, the English art lover and critic, expressed the view that the French could not leave their cathedrals alone for ten minutes!



© Amiens Cathedral Treasury

A masterpiece from the cathedral's treasury: the casket of St. Firmin, the first bishop of Amiens (13th century).

The nineteenth century saw a succession of restoration projects, the most extensive of which lasted from 1849 to 1874 and was directed by Viollet-le-Duc. The current operation is similar in scale, but the comparison stops there. No architect nowadays would go so far as to create, as he did, a gallery on the façade or add his own portrait—even concealed—behind an altar. Current practices respect everything, even the alterations made by Viollet-le-Duc. The statues of the Kings of France decorating the façade are smiling, whereas those dating from the time of Viollet-le-Duc are more austere and will remain that way.

UNESCO placed Amiens Cathedral on the World Heritage List in 1981. France is financing the restoration work. The most significant effort is currently focusing on the West façade, the aim being to ensure that it will enter the third millennium without scaffolding. The rose window, which was dismantled at the end of 1996, will be back in place in the spring of 1997. The sculptures are being cleaned by laser (the first time this has been done in France) and this has revealed minute traces of the early paintwork under the dirt, and has given some idea of the original vivid hues of red, green, white and gold.

The galleries and pinnacles are being cleaned up by a micro rubbing technique (with a 29 micron-calibre abrasive!). In order to protect certain stones from being blackened by the sulphur in the urban atmosphere, some of them have been coated with a mineralizing agent and others with water repellents. Those that are too badly damaged are replaced by good-quality new stones of similar colour. None of Amiens' masterpieces, produced with such marvellous skill, have been lost. Unfortunately, however talented the restorers and however much funding is provided, pollution works very quickly. It is discouraging to note that the cathedral became dirtier in the last decade than during the previous half-century. ■

The cathedral measures 133 metres in length and 42.30 metres from floor to vault. Right, the nave.

© P. Wysocki/S. Frances © Hémisphères, Paris

GREENWATCH

Large Dams

by France Bequette

G. Bizzari © Panos Pictures, London

The Tucuruí hydroelectric dam on the Tocantins River in Pará state (Brazil).

"When the garden is full of fruit, it's time to bottle some for the winter," says Jacques Lecornu, managing director of the International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD). "In the same way, dams retain water reserves for use in the dry season."

Floods claim some 100,000 victims per year, and according to ICOLD's 1995 Position Paper on Dams and Environment, flood control "has always been a particularly significant motive for dam construction." Dams also "mitigate droughts, adjust natural runoff with its seasonal variations and climatic irregularities to meet the pattern of demand for irrigated agriculture, power generation, domestic and industrial supply and navigation. They provide recreation, attract tourism, promote aquaculture and fisheries, and can enhance environmental conditions." Swiss engineer Nicholas Schnitter, author of *A History of Dams* (1994), adds that they also protect estuaries against the ravages of flood tides.

This positive view is increasingly being questioned, however, by environmentalists and scientists who advance strong arguments in support of their case. Concern was expressed as early as 1973 at an ICOLD congress in Madrid in the following terms: "The real problem to be solved is the question whether dams are useful or detrimental, whether they improve our environment as a whole and man's well-being or whether they spoil it, and appreciating in each case whether they should be built and according to what characteristics".

Past and present

The first dam for which there is reliable evidence was built in Jordan 5,000 years ago to supply the city of Jawa with drinking water. Around 1800 B. C., during the reign of the Pharaoh Amenemhet III, the Egyptians constructed a reservoir with the amazing storage capacity of 275 million m^3 in Al Fayyum Valley, some 90 km southwest of Cairo. Known as Lake Moeris (today Lake Qarun), it was used for 3,600 years.

According to Jacques Lecornu, more than half of ICOLD's nearly 40,000 registered large dams (higher than 15 metres) have been built in the last 35 years.

Dams can be divided into two broad categories according to their use: those designed to regulate river flow in the interests of navigability, and those which confine and check the flow of water for a variety of other needs. Each type has a specific design. Most water storage dams (83%) are embankment (earth fill) dams, a less costly technique than masonry. The materials used may be rock (Egypt's Aswan High Dam), earth (the Nurek dam in Tajikistan) or a mixture. There are various types of concrete or masonry dams: gravity-dams consisting of a massive triangular wall (the Grande-Dixence dam, Switzerland), arch dams built in a convex arch facing the reservoir (Zimbabwe's Kariba dam), and buttress dams (e.g. the Alcantara II dam in

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Spain). More than 52% of the world's dams are located in China, 16% in the United States, and 6% in Japan.

Costly savings

Reservoir-dams are mainly used for irrigation and drinking-water supply. Although waterfalls have been used for centuries to generate energy, hydroelectric production has increased over the past thirty years and now meets about 20% of world electricity demand (but only 7% of global energy demand). By economizing on coal and oil, hydroelectricity limits the air pollution caused by fossil fuel combustion. Hydroelectric power could be developed to great advantage if only it were not so often associated with dams that have dire consequences on the environment, especially in dry ecosystems.

The effects that dams can have on the environment are described in *Freshwater Resources*, a booklet produced by UNESCO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). They include changes in the ecosystem, loss of agricultural land, the spread of water-related diseases (especially bilharzia and malaria), regulation of river flow, change in water quality and sediment regime, flood risks, changed conditions for fisheries, agriculture, transport and other economic activities, population displacements, loss of recreational areas and increases in the area's seismic potential because of the reservoir's weight. There may also be effects on climate as well as the disappearance of sometimes rare plant- and wildlife that originally lived in the flooded areas.

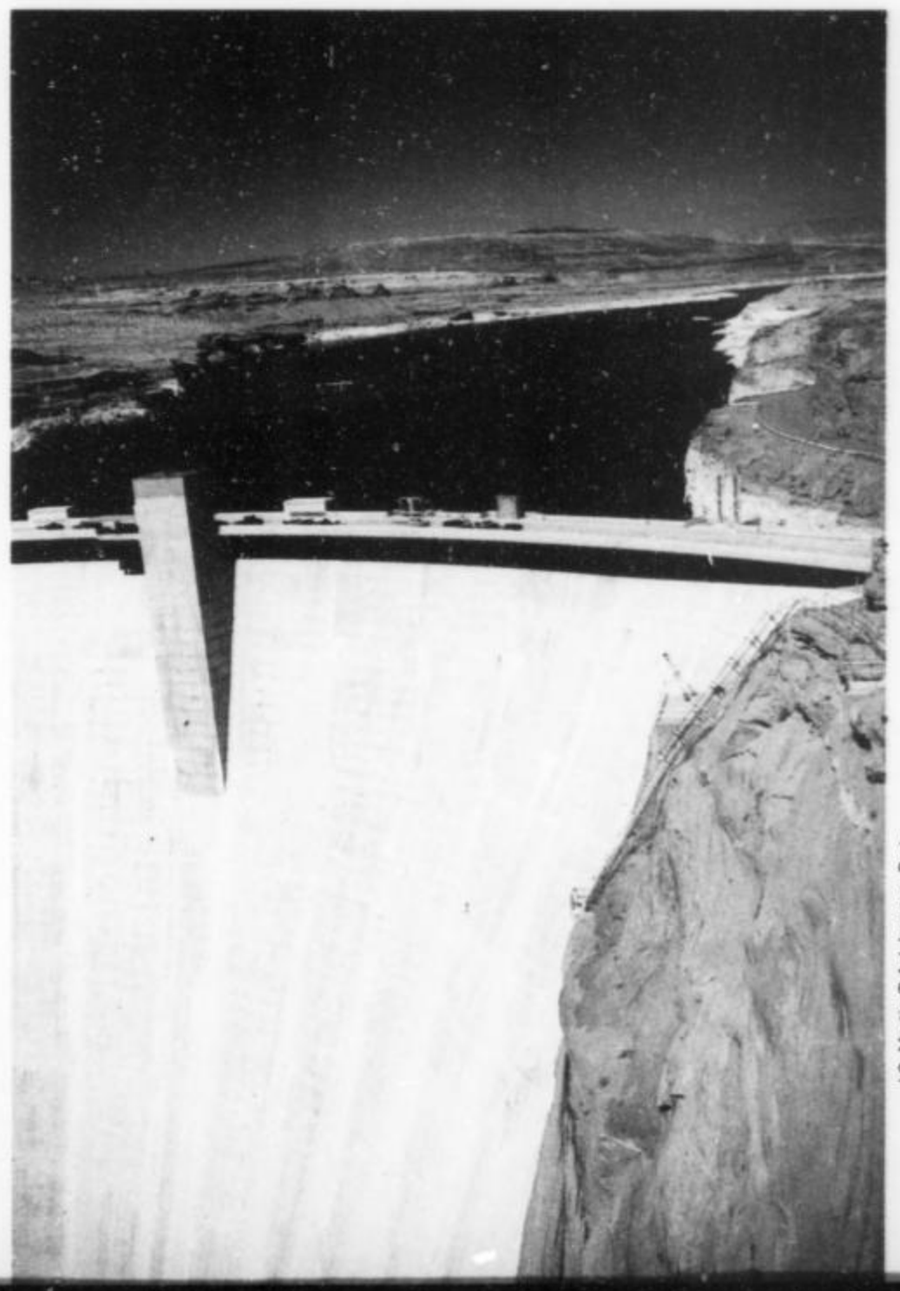
These social and environmental impacts assumed considerable proportions in the 1970s, when it became impossible to ignore the fate of the populations that were affected by dam construction and in some cases summarily displaced without compensation.

Above, the dam at Marib, the former capital of the Saba kingdom (Yemen). One of the world's oldest, it was operational from the 5th century B. C. to the 6th century A. D.

Above right, an irrigation dam near Jogjakarta in Java (Indonesia).

According to the World Bank, the construction of 50 dams has uprooted about 830,000 people, only half of whom were resettled in a satisfactory manner. The Kiambere hydroelectric project in Kenya, for example, has supplied 30% of Kenya's energy needs since 1990, resulting in fuel oil savings of $25 million. When dam construction began it was estimated that 1,778 people would be affected, but eventually 7,500 people were displaced or dispossessed, receiving financial compensation which many spent on marriages or debt repayment, but which was too small for them to buy land equivalent to their original holdings. Resettlement reduced them to poverty. Lubuge hydroelectric plant in China supplies 21% of the energy demand of Yunnan province, yet the 2,320 people displaced were satisfactorily resettled under a plan that offered them a choice between continuing to farm on new land irrigated under the project or being retrained for new jobs. The project brought resettled families access to drinking water, electricity and communication facilities.

The Glen Canyon dam in Utah (United States) with Lake Powell behind.



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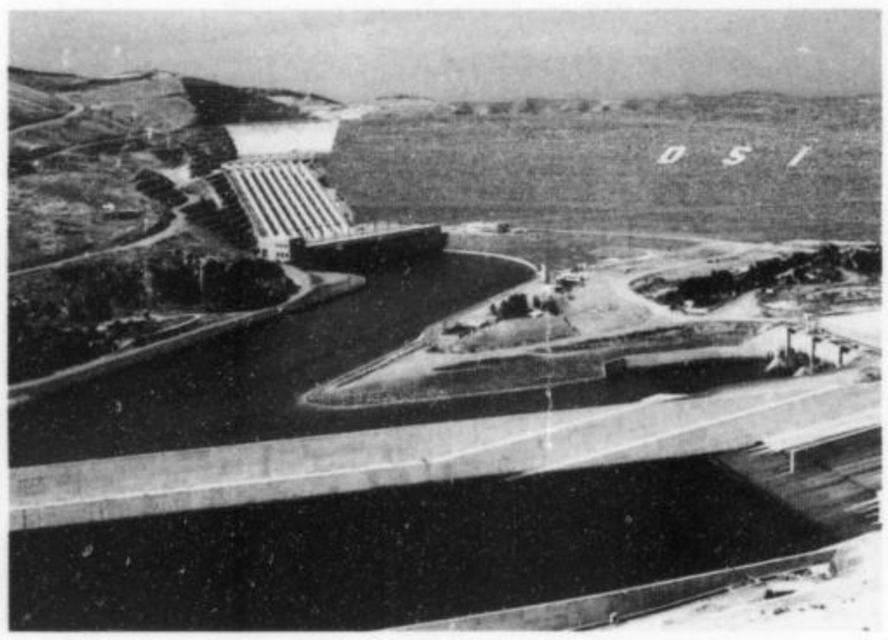
Side effects

The World Bank has adopted guidelines for integrating social and environmental concerns into analysis of dam construction projects and avoiding or mitigating adverse consequences. ICOLD is producing publications and organizing symposia to highlight lessons learned from the past and to present technology for the future. But we are still paying the price today for structures built in the past by engineers who did not foresee all the consequences of their work.

Monique Mainguet, Professor of Geography at the University of Rheims (France), recently published a book, *L'homme et la sécheresse* (Man and Drought, 1995), in which she assesses the impact of the Sélingué dam, built in 1981 on one of the major tributaries of the Niger, upstream of Bamako (Mali). The dam deprived farmers of natural seasonal flooding that irrigated 100,000 hectares of land and made it possible to grow rice, and the fishing industry collapsed three years later. She reports that two other dams in west Africa, the Diama dam on the Senegal River and the Manantali dam on the Bafing River (a tributary of the Senegal), are not living up to expectations. Diama is not preventing sea water from moving 200 km upriver in the dry season. The Manantali "is responsible for the destruction of 10,000 hectares of woodland; it is accelerating erosion and sanding up of ▶



A. Arnaud © Apparence, Paris

The Atatürk dam on the Euphrates (Turkey)

▶ the valley and holding back fertile silt from the delta".

The Aswan High Dam in Egypt is fulfilling its initial purpose (regulation of flooding and the production of hydroelectricity), but it too has drawbacks. Its 500-kilometre-long artificial lake receives some 100 million tonnes of fertile silt that used to be carried and deposited by the Nile during its annual flood. "This silt was once used to manufacture bricks and natural fertilizers that now have to be replaced by costly artificial materials and chemical fertilizers." Without the protective layer that the silt forms on sandy soil, the land is eroded by the wind. What's more, the reservoir loses more than 10 billion m^3 of water annually to evaporation, and a lot of water percolates down into the subsoil, resulting in increased groundwater salination in a richly evaporite soil. But the dam has enabled Egypt to cope with the large-scale droughts that have struck the Sahel in recent decades.

Big but not beautiful

In 1918 Sun Yat-sen, father of the Chinese Republic, had the idea of building the Three Gorges dam on the Yangtze jiang River in Hubei province in central China. Over 75 years later, the first stone of what will eventually be the world's largest dam was laid in 1994. Although it promises to supply 10% of the country's electricity and regulate river levels for nearly 300 kilometres, the dam is a controversial project. For thousands of years poets and painters have sung the rare beauty of its chosen site. Its 175-metre-high concrete wall will create a lake between 500 and 650 kilometres long that will drown a magnificent landscape, completely or partially submerging a dozen towns. About 1.5 million people will have to be resettled. There are also risks of massive pollution and silting up due to the reduction in water flow—sediment and effluent carried by the Blue River will accumulate in the lake. According to some estimates, the total cost of the project could well reach $32 billion. UNESCO and UNEP have asked whether Three Gorges dam should be built.

The estimated cost of the Bakun dam project in Sarawak (Malaysia) is in the region of $6 billion. Located in the mountains on the island of Borneo, it will submerge some 70 to 80,000 hectares of tropical forest and uproot around 10,000 people. Preliminary work has already begun, despite vigorous protests from local environmental organizations. But Malaysia is a member of the International Commission on Large Dams, and is sticking to the terms of the Commission's Position Paper, which states that "Attention to the social and environmental aspects of dams and reservoirs must be a dominating concern pervading all our activities in the same way as the concern for safety. We aim to balance the need for the development of water resources with the conservation of the environment in a way which will not compromise future generations."

Despite their controversial aspects and increasing reservations in scientific and financial circles, large-scale projects are still popular. Since 1986 the World Bank has approved 39 dam projects and lent $7.4 billion (3% of total World Bank lending in the past ten years) to build them. Wouldn't it be better to channel the enormous investments they require into more numerous smaller projects that would be more acceptable to local people and the environment? According to Jacques Lecornu between 1,200 and 1,400 such dams are begun every year. ■

FURTHER READING:

✓ *The Impact of Large Water Projects on the Environment*, proceedings of an international symposium held at UNESCO in 1986, UNESCO-UNEP, 1990

✓ *Freshwater resources*, UNEP-UNESCO, 1995.

✓ *L'homme et la sécheresse*, Monique Mainguet, Paris, 1995

✓ *ICOLD Position Paper on Dams and the Environment*, 1995. (ICOLD, 151, Bd. Haussmann, 75008 Paris, France. Tel: (33) (0)1 40 42 68 24; Fax: (33) (0)1 40 42 60 71

✓ *L'Egypte et le haut-barrage d'Assouan*, M. Bakre, J. Bethemont, Presses de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, Saint-Etienne, France, 1980

initiatives

CREM, a leader in urbistics

The town of Martigny in Switzerland (15,000 inhabitants) is just the right size to serve as a real-life laboratory for the Centre for Energy and Municipal Research (CREM). CREM's guiding principle is urbistics, or computerized town management.

CREM seeks to reconcile concern for the environment with development in an urban context. This means bringing together town planners, engineers, builders and transportation, water, energy and telecommunications utilities, which do not always see eye to eye. In partnership with the Lausanne Federal Polytechnic, CREM's small pluridisciplinary and highly motivated team collects data on everything to do with towns and how they work. This information is used as a basis for developing, testing and making available tools and methods for planning, managing and maintaining municipal infrastructures. The goal is to limit investment, reduce effluent, minimize environmental damage and make good use of resources by implementing a range of computerized measures.

Using this approach, CREM has launched a programme to clean up the heating systems of public buildings. It has also shown that the centralized supply of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to towns cut off from existing natural gas networks reduces energy costs and environmental impacts. In 1995 it completed development of its SyCREM® (version 4.0) personal computer software for monitoring energy resource use. The software is being used by several companies in the Martigny region.

CREM also organizes courses and seminars on which it publishes reports and a newsletter, *Vecteur*. ■

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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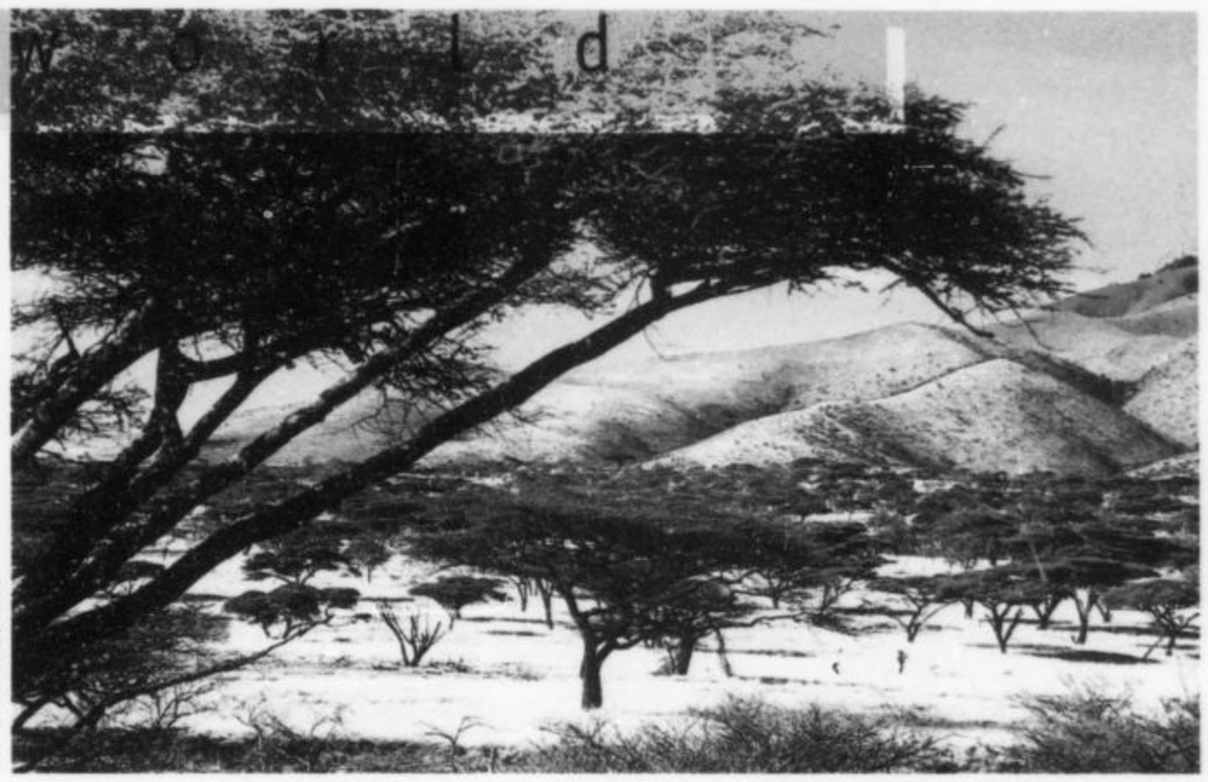
Tel: (41) 027 721 25 40; Fax: (41) 027 722 99 77; E-mail: crem@pingnet.ch



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MONEY GROWS ON TREES

Farmers in the centre of Côte d'Ivoire have high hopes that gum arabic trees may prove to be a profitable crop. The gum arabic or gum acacia is a small tree (from 4 to 6 metres) that produces a resin that can fetch from $2,000 to $4,000 per ton. It is used as an ingredient in chemical products, medicines and some kinds of tyre. The Inter-African Agency for Development and the Environment, a non-governmental organization created by young people in Katiola province, has already planted 60 hectares of the trees. Easy to grow and already well entrenched in Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Sudan, the gum acacia should help to improve the living standards of Ivorian farmers. ■

SUMMIT MEETING

Colombia's Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountain chain, which rises to a height of 5,775 metres, contains the world's highest coastal peak. It is also a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve covering over 17,000 km² and including the sources of 36 rivers that supply 1.5 million people with water. By the early 1980s marijuana cultivation had destroyed 100,000 hectares of forest and endangered a whole range of ecosystems, indigenous farming and water supplies for the plains below. In 1986 the Foundation for the Protection of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta got down to work on the problem and a conservation strategy began to be implemented in 1992. The creation of an association of Sierra Nevada towns has been one milestone in the development of co-operation. Its existence is a remarkable achievement in view of the spectrum of groups that had to be brought together—guerrilla fighters, the army, drug producers, big landowners, small farmers, government officials and local people—and convinced that they share a common interest in safeguarding the environment. ■

Neil Cooper © Panos Pictures, London

TRADITION VERSUS EROSION

In mountainous and semi-arid Ethiopia some 1.5 billion tons of soil are degraded each year by erosion. In an attempt to solve the problem, scientists have turned to traditional farming techniques used by the Konso people who live near Lake Turkana (Lake Rudolf) in the south of the country. The Konso manage to farm steep arid slopes by terracing and alternating crops, digging small basins where they deposit plant waste, controlling cattle grazing and practising agroforestry. They even manufacture straw and sorghum pipes to drain water run-off which would otherwise carry away the thin fertile layer of topsoil. ■

TURKEY HOSTS WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS

Forests cover about a quarter of Turkey's land area (some 20.2 million hectares). 98% of them are state-owned and managed. There are 30 national parks, and several nature parks and wildlife reserves have been created since 1958. Moreover 9,000 of Europe's 11,000 plant species are found in Turkey, a botanist's paradise. All these are good reasons why Turkey will be hosting the 11th World Forestry Congress in the town of Antalya from 13 to 22 October 1997. The event will be sponsored by the Ministry of Forests and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). ■

WATER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

"Water in the Mediterranean region, situations, perspectives and strategies for sustainable water resources management" is the theme of a useful bilingual (English-French) document published by the Regional Activity Centre of the Blue Plan, an arm of the United Nations Environment Programme's Mediterranean Action Plan. The document was prepared on the occasion of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on local water management held in Marseilles (France) in November 1996. Addressing the Conference, Michel Batisse, President of the Blue Plan, called for "improvement in management capacities on the economic, social and environmental fronts, strengthening of the relevant legal and financial institutions, greater participation by users, especially farmers, and more intensive training in water-related fields." ■

For further information, contact: Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), Place Sophie-Laffitte, Sophia Antipolis, 06560 Valbonne, France. Tel: (33) (0)4 93 65 39 59; Fax: (33) (0)4 93 65 35 28; E-mail: planbleu@iway.fr

DEADLY HOOKS

Since high-seas drift nets have—theoretically—been banned because of their destructiveness to marine life, another deadly effective fishing method has appeared: fishing lines up to 130 kilometres long that can carry as many as 3,000 hooks. Thousands of boats are equipped with them. The long lines are more selective than the drift nets and present less of a danger to marine mammals, but they are so effective that some species which take a hook easily, like swordfish, are endangered. In view of the small size of the swordfish now found in American markets, some biologists claim that we are "eating the babies". Among other innocent victims of long lines are albatross, which take the bait and then drown after being hooked. ■

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THE WORLD IS A SANCTUARY

BY HENRYK SKOLIMOWSKI

The time has come to abandon the metaphor which has for so long dominated our perception of the world and to reject the damaging assumption that the world is a clock-like mechanism within which we are little cogs and wheels. It has led us to reduce everything, including human life, to the status of components of this great machine. The consequences have been disastrous. Only when we find a new metaphor and invent a new conception of the world shall we be able to stand up to the senseless, destructive forces that have swept over our lives.

According to one tenet of ecological thought the world is a sanctuary and we should treat it as such. This assumption is the basis of a completely different outlook on the universe and our place within it. If we live in a sanctuary, then we must treat it with reverence and care. We must be the earth's custodians and shepherds. The idea of stewardship naturally follows from the assumption that the world is a sanctuary.

These are the basic components of what I call the ecological metanoia: simultaneously changing our metaphor of the world, our attitude to it, and our thinking about it. This can and is being done. Of course it is a large and difficult project, and this is why it is progressing slowly, haltingly, sometimes grudgingly. For psychological and historical reasons, we are reluctant to change, but deep down, we know that we must do so. This is not the end of the story, however. Other important changes must occur before we arrive at a sane, sustainable and fulfilling world.

This quest for meaning leads us on to the question of the purpose of human life and to those ultimate concerns upon which our humanity is based.

One characteristic of our times is the atrophy of meaning. Both religious people and secularists are aware that there is a desperate search for meaning in modern society. We do not find a meaning in consumption, entertainment and ordinary jobs. We look for a larger purpose and we do not find it. For this larger purpose requires a transcendent dimension to our life.

This is where eschatology comes in. Eschatology is the sphere of human thinking which is concerned with the ultimate ends of human life and thus with the meaning of human life, and with the question of what gives meaning to meaning. Eschatology has traditionally been the discipline which envisages transcendent goals as the purpose of our life. These goals are often, but not always, religious. Transcendent goals and purposes must not be mistaken for a religious agenda or religious beliefs.

Why do we need a new eschatology? Why do we need a new transcendent purpose to give meaning to human life? The answer is that secular eschatology, promising fulfilment here on earth in materialist and secular terms alone has failed dismally. Instead of bringing happiness and fulfilment, it has robbed us of the deeper dimensions of human life. Some secular humanists are aware of this and have attempted to devise a new scheme, whereby a new transcendent purpose is grafted on to secularism. They postulate a task of continual self-improvement in the pursuit of perfectibility and freedom. But these are only words. If perfectibility and self-improvement are to mean anything, they must be rooted in a deeper sense of transcendence which goes beyond secularism.

It is thus time to abandon our linear modes of thinking and an exploitative attitude toward nature in favour of an ecological perspective and a new form of spirituality.

Let us very briefly state some of the main contentions of the new ecological world-view, which are also components of the new eschatology. The universe is on a meaningful journey of self-realization. We are a part of this journey. The universe is not a haphazard heap of matter and we meaninglessly drifting particles in it. The new Astrophysics, the New Physics and the Anthropic Principle all converge to inform us that we live in an intelligent universe, self-actualizing itself. There is a wonderful coherence in this process of continuous self-transcendence. Nowadays this is well supported by science. I am not saying it is "proved" by science, for science cannot prove such things. A leading contemporary physicist, Freeman Dyson, has said: "Looking at all the 'coincidences' which have occurred in the evolution of the cosmos, we cannot escape the conclusion that the cosmos behaves as if it had known that we were coming". A leading American physicist, John Archibald Wheeler, maintains that when we look at the universe, it is the universe itself which is looking at itself, through our eyes and minds. For we live in a curiously participatory universe, and we are profoundly woven in this stupendous participatory process.

We are the eyes through which the universe looks at itself. We are the minds through which the universe contemplates itself. We have an incurable urge to transcend because the will of the universe—to continually self-transcend itself—is built into us. We are cosmic beings. We share with the entire universe the dimension of transcendence and the urge to self-realization. This has been the basis of all enduring forms of spirituality.

A wonderful journey lies ahead of us as we seek to actualize the cosmic meaning which resides in us, to help the universe and all its creatures in the journey of self-actualization and in the process of healing the earth and making it blossom again. ■

LISTENING

REDISCOVERING LILI BOULANGER

BY ISABELLE LEYMARIE

A brilliantly precocious French composer who dazzled the world of European music at the beginning of the 20th century.

© Harlingue-Viollet, Paris

"The works of Lili Boulanger," the composer and conductor Igor Markevitch has written, "impress me with their solitude. They are indifferent to fashion and seem oblivious of what is written about them. I think that this is why they endure, and it may even explain the strange delay before their true worth was recognized."

This long "delay" is seemingly not yet over. Yet Lili Boulanger, who died at the age of twenty-four, left us music that is both expressive and luminous, moving and enchanting. She revealed her genius and fulfilled her vocation with an urgency that was sharpened by the imminence of death.

"Lili" (Juliette Marie Olga) Boulanger was born in Paris on 21 August 1893 of a Russian mother and a French father. The family had a musical tradition going back several generations. Lili's mother was an opera singer and her father, a composer (especially of comic opera) and teacher of voice at the Paris Conservatory, had won the Grand Prix de Rome for composition for his cantata *Achille*. Her sister Nadia—six years her senior—was one of the twentieth century's most influential teachers of composition, and trained many singers, instrumentalists and composers, including Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Astor Piazzolla, Quincy Jones and the trumpeter Donald Byrd.

Lili showed her exceptional musical gifts at a very early age. When she was six she sang songs by Fauré, who accompanied her on the piano. Despite indifferent health, she learned to play the organ and began composing at twelve when she wrote *Valse en mi majeur* (Waltz in E Major) and *La lettre de mort* (The Letter of Death) in 1905. She was attracted to sacred music, and impressed her family and friends by her contemplative nature, maturity and spirituality. "It is a finished monument," wrote French composer Henri Barraud of her work, "firmly established in its fullness, its sobre style and a classicism which owes nothing to schooling and everything to natural balance, a blend of knowledge and ability. There is no trace of weakness in her thinking or inexperience in her composition, no youthful squandering of resources or vitality, no blaze of ill-contained passion—if passion there be, it has lost all carnality and become a radiant beam of light."

Nadia, who was herself an organist and had been a pupil of Fauré, taught Lili harmony and counterpoint. Lili also received advice from Roger Ducasse, a family friend and another of Fauré's pupils. She studied the piano with Raoul Pugno, a cultivated neighbour of the Boulangers' at Hanneucourt-Gargenville in the greater Paris region where she composed prolifically. Under the guidance of Georges Caussade, a teacher of fugue and counterpoint at the Paris Conservatory and a celebrated harmonist, she soon became adept at composition. In 1911 and 1912 she composed choral music and cantatas, including *Hymne au soleil* ("Hymn to the Sun").

She entered the Conservatory the following year and studied with Paul Vidal, an old friend of Debussy and Liszt, and Maurice Emmanuel, an enthusiast for modal music. She practised for the Prix de Rome with the cantata *Pour les funérailles d'un soldat* ("For the Burial of a Soldier") with words from a play by Alfred de Musset. She was particularly fond of Debussy, especially *Pelléas et Mélisande* and *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, which influenced several of her works. But she was ahead of her time, and gradually moved away from impressionism and found her own voice. In 1913, at the age of nineteen, she became the first woman to win the Grand Prix de Rome, awarded for her cantata *Faust et Hélène*. Her works now began to be published, and *Faust et Hélène* was performed by the celebrated Concerts Colonne in November of the same year.

In 1914, despite declining health, she made a trip to Italy that was a revelation to her, composed in Rome, then returned to Nice in the South of France where she began her cycle for voice, *Clairières dans le ciel* ("Clearings in the Sky") based on a poem by Francis Jammes, instrumental pieces and the *Psalms*. During the First World War, Lili and Nadia founded a Franco-American support committee to send letters and food parcels to the fighting men. Despite rest, and an operation in 1917, Lili's health continued to decline; she faced adversity with exemplary courage and serenity. In the last two years of her life she completed the three *Psaumes* ("Psalms") and *Vieille prière bouddhique* ("Old Buddhist Prayer") for voice and orchestra, *Un matin de printemps* ("A Spring Morning"), for violin (or flute) and piano, and her masterpiece, *Pie Jesu* (for voice, organ, string quartet and harps), which she was too weak to write herself and dictated to Nadia from her bed. She died in Mézy near Paris on 15 March 1918.

Lili always remained an example for Nadia, who praised her sister's "moral and spiritual superiority" and "purity". Throughout her life Nadia steadfastly kept her sister's memory alive by propagating her work and infusing into her students the sacred fire that had burned in Lili. ■

AUTHORS

TAHAR BEN JELLOUN is a Moroccan-born novelist and poet who writes in French. Several of his works have been published in English translation, including *The Sacred Night* (1989), which won the Goncourt Prize in 1987, *Silent Day in Tangiers* (1991) and *The Sand Child* (1987). His latest novel, *La nuit de l'erreur*, has just been published by Editions du Seuil, Paris.

JEROME CHARYN, of the United States, teaches film history at the American University of Paris. He has written many novels and several works of non-fiction, including *New York, chronique d'une ville sauvage* (Gallimard, Paris, 1993). His most recent published work in English is *El Bronx* (Warner Books, 1997). His novel *The Dark Lady from Belorusse* will be published in the U.S. later this year by St. Martin's Press.

LAJPAT RAI JAGGA, of India, is a professor of History at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi (India).

EMILE TEMIME is a French historian who has spent many years studying international migratory movements. He has co-authored several works on Spain and published a 4-volume study on Marseilles, *Migrance, Histoire des migrations à Marseille* (Edisud, Aix-en-Provence, 1989-91) and *Marseille transit. Les passagers de Belsunce* (Autrement, Paris, 1995).

LUZ PACHECO, of Bolivia, is a social anthropologist specializing in the rural world of the Andes.

HADANI DITMARS, of Canada, is a journalist specializing in intercultural relations.

ANISSA BARRAK, a Tunisian journalist, is cultural attaché with her country's delegation to UNESCO. She is managing editor of the magazine *Confluences Méditerranée* and author of *Villes exemplaires, Villes déchirées* (L'Harmattan, Paris, 1994).

CÉCILE ROMANE is a Franco-British writer whose published work includes a novel, *La Népalaise*, (Orban/Plon, Paris, 1987) and a story, *Les téméraires* (Flammarion, Paris, 1993).

FRANCE BEQUETTE is a Franco-American journalist specializing in environmental questions.

HENRYK SKOLIMOWSKI, of Poland, is professor of ecological philosophy at the Technical University of Lodz. He is the author of many books and articles.

ISABELLE LEYMARIE, a Franco-American musicologist, has recently published *Du tango au reggae, Musiques noires d'Amérique latine et des Caraïbes* (From Tango to Reggae, Black Music of Latin American and the Caribbean, Flammarion, Paris, 1996) and *Musiques caraïbes* ("Caribbean Music", Actes Sud, Arles, 1996).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A TARNISHED HERO

In your December 1996 issue ("Ephemeral Art") you published a very interesting article by Iaroslav Isaievych on Bohdan Khmelnytsky, a historical figure who is little known in many countries despite the very important role he played in the history of the Ukraine.

But nothing was said about one aspect of his career. In the history of the Jewish people Khmelnytsky is known as the archetypal organizer of pogroms, a wholesale murderer of Jews. The English historian Paul Johnson's well documented and objective *A History of the Jews* (1987) which the author of your article unfortunately seems not to have read, shows that his exploits were surpassed only by the person who has been dubbed the "Khmelnytsky of the 20th century". The Nazis clearly possessed infinitely greater resources to carry out their murderous plans.

Objectivity in analysing notable historical figures is also a way of teaching tolerance and mutual respect.

Congratulations on your magazine's excellent quality,

G. Finkelstein
Jerusalem (Israel)

When the Ukrainian peasants and Cossacks rebelled against the Poles and set up an independent Ukraine, Bohdan Khmelnytsky's troops perpetrated acts of unspeakable savagery and cruelty on the Jews.

Most of the massacres were committed between May and November 1648. The Jewish communities on the east bank of the Dnepr were exterminated in the early days of the revolt. During the summer, persecutions extended to the river's west bank. By mid-June no Jews were left in the villages and towns of Volhynia (these details are taken from the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, vol. 5, Jerusalem, pp. 480-481).

It is impossible to say precisely how many died in these pogroms, which went on into 1649. Jewish chronicles record that there were 100,000 deaths and that 300 communities were exterminated.

Emmanuel Moses
Paris (France)

OUR COMMON ANCESTOR

Is the mind-set that causes us to practise intolerance and prejudice the fault of educational systems in use around the world?

We know that we are descended from a common ancestor, *Homo erectus*, who evolved into *Homo sapiens*, and began to migrate from Africa to all parts of the world. We are all descended from the same African ancestor.

Should the schools and universities of the world each day instil this knowledge into the minds of the world's students? If they did, perhaps they would dispel the mind-set that leans toward intolerance and prejudice.

Martin J. O'Malley, Jr.
Passaic, New Jersey (U.S.A.)

PROGRESS AND EQUITY

"The poor countries must be helped to acquire new technologies and equipment, to train their people and enter existing networks, in short to modernize along with the others," writes Federico Mayor in his Commentary column on page 39 of your December 1996 issue.

To my mind, this is quite a challenge. Development aid from the wealthy countries has dwindled in the past few years.

The day when we manage to "ally progress *with* fairness" men and women will be living in the best of worlds.

Abdou Tini Kano
Tibiri (Niger)

CITIZENS OF THE WORLD

In his interview on peace education in your January 1997 issue, Professor Johan Galtung discusses a number of interesting ideas to which I subscribe.

But to my mind he fails to grasp the fact that conflict is sterile whereas peace is fertile. There is a risk that his peace studies will not get "to grips with . . . violence" (even though he realizes that communication and education are essential tools for doing this), because what must be done is shoulder the noble task of developing a system to promote peaceful collaboration.

The days when we were Chinese, French, Indians or Chileans are over. Now we are all citizens of the world with responsibility for the planet.

Claudia Merazzi
Bienne (Switzerland)

CARTOON ISSUE: AN ORDER OF MERIT

I am used to the fine illustrations that you usually publish and thought that the aesthetic quality of the cartoons in your July-August 1996 double issue (*UNESCO Through the Looking-Glass*) was uneven.

This is my order of preference:
1) Egypt
2) Military dictatorship
3) World Heritage (pp. 46-55)
4) UNESCO in the year 3000
5) A Lone Fortune adventure

I would have thought more highly of the "Nomads" story if the characters had not been depicted with like dog-like faces. The Tuareg, Masai and other nomadic peoples deserve something better than caricature.

Guy Barrère
Tamanrasset (Algeria)

Thank you for for your appreciation of our cartoon issue. Jano, the author of "Nomads", always draws the characters of his comic strips, whatever their theme, with the features of animals. — Editor

AUTHOR!

Why have you stopped giving biographical details, even just a line or two, about your contributors? It would be interesting at least to know their profession and nationality.

Yolande Briffa
Houilles (France)

Brief biographical notes on contributors are now published at the end of each issue. See this page. — Editor

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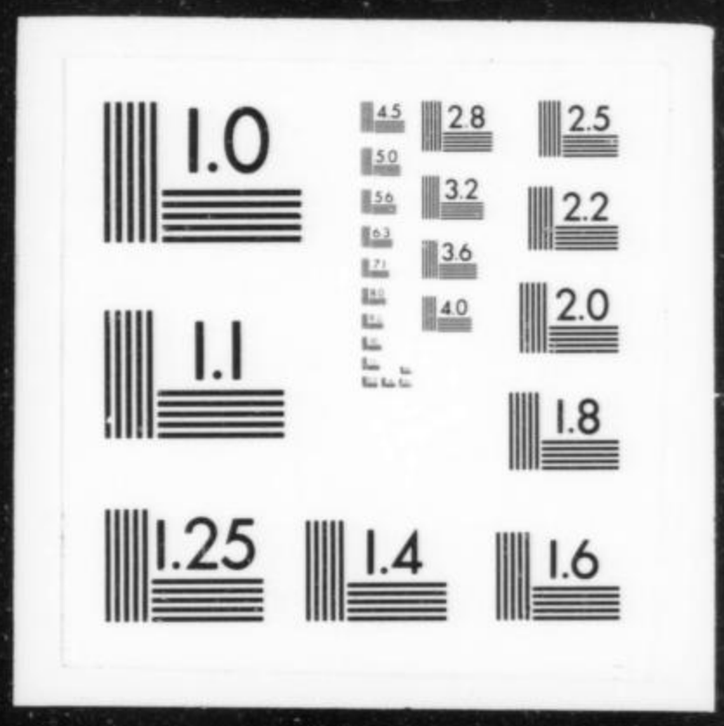
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